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The Eurovision winner on fear, fame, and fighting for human rights

Marina Hyde It's the nation's favourite cocktail – Phil and Holly on the rocks



Journal

The Guardian

Newspaper of the year

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Alarm as ministers target housing standards to cut asylum hotels bill

Exclusive Braverman in bid to axe regulations in private sector properties

Kiran Stacey
Political correspondent

Ministers are to remove basic housing protections from asylum seekers under new rules designed to move tens of thousands out of hotels and into the private rented sector.

The changes would exempt landlords from regulations governing everything from electrical safety to minimum room sizes, leading campaigners to warn the government is preparing to cram people into small spaces to try to alleviate the crisis in asylum seeker accommodation.

MPs are to vote as soon as today on the plans, which have been put forward by Suella Braverman, the home secretary, and Michael Gove, the housing secretary. Under the changes, landlords of asylum seekers in England and Wales would no longer have to register with local authorities. The rules would allow landlords to house asylum seekers for two years without obtaining a house in multiple occupancy (HMO) licence, a standard requirement for any landlord renting to more than one household in a single property.

Mary Atkinson, a campaigns and network manager at the Joint Council for the Welfare of Immigrants, said: "HMO licences exist to make sure that accommodation meets basic levels of safety and sanitation. However, much asylum accommodation already falls below these standards, with people seeking sanctuary housed in cramped, windowless rooms smaller than prison cells.

"Without HMO licences, already traumatised people will be at risk of living in places that are unfit for human habitation."

Gove is pushing the rules through the Commons at Braverman's request as the government scrambles to reduce the number of people temporarily housed in hotels. He plans to bring them to a vote in the Commons with little fanfare on a day that will otherwise be dominated by the publication of his bill to ban landlords from evicting tenants without cause.

Massive backlogs in processing have led to more than 50,000 asylum seekers being housed in hotels across the country, at a cost of £6m a day. Meanwhile, cramped and unsanitary conditions in temporary accommodation have led to outbreaks of highly contagious diseases such as diphtheria. The temporary solutions have caused alarm among healthcare workers and migration campaigners. They have

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Kyiv's new defences repel heavy assault

Luke Harding *Kyiv*
Dan Sabbagh

Ukraine said yesterday it had neutralised the Kremlin's most potent hypersonic weapon, shooting down all six Kinzhal missiles launched at Kyiv, but hours later it emerged the intense night time attack had damaged a Patriot air defence system.

Yurii Ihnat, a spokesperson for Ukraine's air command, said Moscow had also bombarded the capital with nine Kalibr missiles and three ballistic rockets, as well as six attack drones and three reconnaissance drones. All were shot down, he said, thwarting what he called "air terrorism".

But the attack appeared to have damaged a US-made Patriot air defence battery, US sources later told CNN. Officials warned the system may have to be

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Seoul reaffirmed as a capital of pop culture and key battleground for luxury brands at Gucci's catwalk show at Gyeongbokgung Palace. **News** *Page 15* →

PHOTOGRAPH: JUSTIN SHIN/GETTY

'Tiredness' the barrier to healthy UK lifestyle

Denis Campbell
Health policy editor

It's the question many of us ask ourselves: why don't I exercise more, eat better food and generally lead a healthier lifestyle?

For many who want to, but just can't seem to make it happen, it turns out the answer to that question is – feeling just too tired.

A survey has found that tiredness is why 35% of people don't make the changes to their diet and physical activity levels that would help them close the gap between good intentions and concrete action.

The results, from a YouGov poll of 2,086 UK adults for the World Cancer Research Fund (WCRF), illustrate the barriers many people face in their desire to adopt and stick to healthy habits. When asked

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News



Facial recognition software from tech firm Megvii in China, where it is claimed it can detect ethnicity
PHOTOGRAPH: GILLES SABRIÈ/NEW YORK TIMES/REDUX/EYEVINE

Home Office pushing for use of facial recognition tech in everyday policing

Vikram Dodd
Police and crime correspondent

Ministers are calling for facial recognition technology to be "embedded" in everyday policing, including potentially linking it to the body-worn cameras officers use as they patrol Britain's streets.

Until now, police use of live facial recognition has been limited to special operations such as football matches and public events including the coronation.

Prof Fraser Sampson, the biometrics and surveillance camera commissioner, told the Guardian this expansion would be very significant and said "the Orwellian concerns of people, the ability of the state to watch every move, is very real".

The government's intentions were revealed in a document produced for the surveillance camera commissioner, discussing changes to the oversight of technology and surveillance. It said: "This issue is made more pressing given the policing minister [Chris Philp] expressed his desire to embed facial recognition technology in policing and is considering what more the government can do to support the police on this.

"Such embedding is extremely likely to include exploring integration of this technology with police body-worn video."

Sampson confirmed its accuracy as did a Home Office spokesperson, with the document summarising a government-organised meeting held last month to discuss the technology.

Body-worn video was brought in to capture evidence and interactions between officers and the public. The small cameras can currently capture video in high definition and it is technically possible to link them to live facial recognition [LFR], a system which matches the biometrics of people's faces against those held on a watchlist. Sampson said: "A camera on an officer walking down the street could check the faces against a watchlist of suspects. They could check hundreds, if not thousands, of people while on duty.

"The technology will be capable of doing many things, not all of which the public would want. In China the algorithm can pick up ethnicity. It will be able to estimate age, some manufacturers claim it can estimate someone's mood or state of anxiety."

Sampson said the rules for LFR until now were not devised by parliament, but interpreted in a hurry after the authorities, including the police, lost court cases over the use of the controversial technology.

"If the use is unconstrained then no one is in any position to give guarantees about what comparisons LFR is making, what conclusions it is drawing and what the consequences are for you. Policing is based on consent and trust, and confidence is vital to policing," he said.

Samson added: "The Orwellian concerns of people, the ability of the state to watch every move, is very real and that needs to be addressed in any future regulatory framework about the state's use of this technology."

A Home Office spokesperson said the government backed the greater use of facial recognition. "The government is committed to empower the police to use new technologies like facial recognition in a fair and proportionate way," they said.

"Facial recognition plays a crucial role in helping the police tackle serious offences including murder, knife crime, rape, child sexual exploitation and terrorism."

Emmanuelle Andrews of civil rights group Liberty, which opposes any use of LFR, said: "If the government is intent on rolling out Big Brother-style facial recognition technology, subjecting more and more people to this invasive practice, it infringes the right to go about our lives without being surveilled and monitored by the police."

Police believe live facial recognition could essentially industrialise the spotting of wanted people.

Lindsey Chiswick, the National Police Chiefs' Council's lead for facial recognition, said: "As the exploitation of technology and data increasingly benefits society, it is right that policing also considers how new technology can help to prevent crime in an effective, well-governed and proportionate way.

"With transparency, accountability and appropriate standards, we believe the use of emerging technology can help policing tackle crime and ultimately keep communities safe."

The Metropolitan police's use of LFR at the coronation resulted in one arrest from 68,000 faces scanned, new figures show. LFR cameras close to the Savoy and Bridge Street in Westminster scanned nearly 38,000 faces and produced no alerts against a facial list of 10,451 people police regarded as suspects. An LFR camera set up in Piccadilly scanned 30,633 faces and produced two alerts, one of which led to an arrest and one of which led to no further action.

Prof Pete Fussey, a surveillance expert at the University of Essex, questioned the scale of human rights infringement involved: "These statistics raise legitimate questions over the proportionality of such tactics given the established legal principle that the human rights of all those whose faces are scanned are engaged, whether they are wanted by the police or not."

The Home Office says a new bill that abolishes the role of the surveillance camera commissioner, will simplify "the oversight of police use of biometrics and surveillance cameras" making it easier for police and public to understand.

Others say such legislation would lead to less oversight just as the dangers of the technology become greater and its widespread use becomes very real.

Why support the Guardian?

Marina Hyde
Columnist



My absolute favourite thing about writing for the Guardian is not being told what to write. Everything you see under my byline is my fault alone, and cannot be blamed on the whims of some insistent editor or proprietor. Actually, hang on - they did order me to write this very thing you're reading right now. But as temporary captors, they're treating me very well. I have a plentiful supply of tofu. Of course, the best way to prove I am a well and happy hostage would be to simply hold up a copy of today's paper next to my face. But I'd like you to know that today's paper - like every day's paper - has so much more to offer than useful proof-of-life if you do happen to end up in mock incarceration. As you turn its inky pages, you will find all manner of interesting stories, brought to you by writers and photographers and editors who still love this crazy old technology, and hope to give you a good time with it too.

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From left, jurists Rungano Nyoni, Julia Ducournau, Ruben Östlund, Brie Larson and Maryam Touzani
PHOTOGRAPH: LIONEL HAHN/GETTY IMAGES

'We can all watch together': Cannes opens with a passionate case for cinema-going

Xan Brooks
Cannes

The jury president of the Cannes film festival yesterday made a passionate case for the importance of cinema in a post-pandemic world where audiences prefer to gorge their entertainment online.

Speaking on the opening day of the festival, Ruben Östlund positioned Cannes as a stronghold of community in an increasingly atomised world.

"If you look at today's world, you see that cinema is unique for the simple reason that it offers a room where we can all watch films together," he said. "All the other content, we're accessing it on our devices, in our little bubbles, consuming culture like zombies and not reflecting what we're looking at.

"So going to the cinema is almost a political stance. We come together and have a conversation about the world. We find out who we are and where we're going. That is cinema's strongest selling point. I think people want that collective experience."

Now in its 76th year, the annual gathering is usually a bellwether for film-making trends attended by stars and tastemakers occupying both sides of the camera.

But after a turbulent period for an industry beset by changes in viewing habits and questions over the financial viability movie theatres, Östlund finds himself having to justify the existence of traditional cinema, as well as talking up its leading lights.

Östlund's view was supported by Iris Knobloch, who is in her inaugural year as the film festival's overall president - and is the first woman to take the role.

"Films are back in theatres," she said. "And the public is returning, too.

"Even the streaming platforms have realised that nothing can replace the experience of releasing a film in the cinema. Streaming is a good addition to the ecosystem, but cinema itself is eternal."

Assuming visitors are able to obtain a ticket, this year's event provides an analogue feast of feature productions and red-carpet premieres. Potential highlights from the schedule include Martin Scorsese's 1920s-set epic The Killers of the Flower Moon along with Harrison Ford's swan song as Indiana Jones.

Östlund's focus, however, is on the 21 films selected to compete for the crowning Palme d'Or award. He arrived in Cannes as a two-time winner, having been awarded the Palme d'Or for 2017's The Square and last year's Triangle of Sadness. Nonetheless he regards himself as a relative newcomer, providing a bridge between the old and new guard of Cannes.

"My goal is to represent a new style of European cinema - to create wild, entertaining movies that at the same time are thought-provoking.

"I think the fact that I'm part of that new conversation is one of the reasons I was offered the position [of jury president]. So I'm pleased to represent the younger players."

Initial evidence appears to bear out his assertion. The average age of the directors in competition this year is 62, but the average age of the nine-member jury - which includes the Hollywood actors Paul Dano and Brie Larson - is a comparatively youthful 44.

Outside the Cannes Palais, it was business as usual on the festival's first day as the guests gathered for the world premiere of Jeanne du Barry, Maïwenn's lavish period drama that has already sparked controversy for its casting of Johnny Depp in the role of King Louis XV.

Largely filmed in the palace of Versailles, Jeanne du Barry spotlights an elitist 18th-century world of court intrigue and royal romance and celebrates the aristocracy's last gasp, just before the French nobles lost their heads.

After all the talk of democracy and fresh blood, Cannes' choice of opening film struck some onlookers as telling. The presence of Östlund and his team may signal a gentle changing of the guard. But the old order dies hard at the Cannes film festival.

Film review

Depp preens in silly but seductive spectacle

Jeanne du Barry
Cannes film festival
★★★☆☆

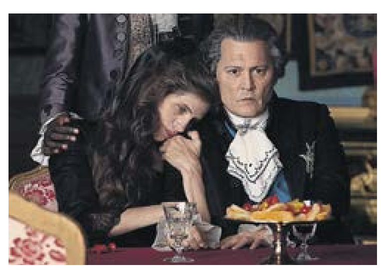
Peter Bradshaw

The rosebud lips of Johnny Depp in this film are pursed in a strange expression of irony, stupefied entitlement and droll, martyred awareness of the absurdity of which his royal person is the centre: a human candle starting to melt. He plays Louis XV in the decadent court of pre-revolutionary Versailles, purring his lines in French and portraying him as an ageing, slow-moving dandy - though Rip Torn was sexier in the same role in Sofia Coppola's Marie Antoinette.

Depp might actually have been better cast as the lead: Jeanne, Madame du Barry, the low-born mistress and royal favourite with whom the king was scandalously infatuated at court, permitting her all manner of intimacies. Jeanne is in fact played by the movie's director, Maïwenn, who has written the screenplay with Teddy Lussi-Modeste and Nicolas Livecchi.

Jeanne is supposed to be a rebel, although apart from causing some flutter among the courtiers, she never seriously challenges anything about court life at all. It is a preposterous confection of a movie, like one of the rich sweetmeats being languidly nibbled at court, but very moreish, nonetheless. It is handsomely furnished and costumed with blue-chip character actors in the supporting roles and some wonderful locations and interiors at the Palace of Versailles itself.

Maïwenn plays Jeanne as a sexy, smart courtesan who reads books in the bath. Her first important conquest is the Comte du Barry, a fawning sybarite played by Melvil Poupaud, to whose sweet-natured and bookish son Adolphe she takes a platonic shine, tutoring him in philosophy and poetry. Du Barry sees the obvious social advantage in getting his mistress introduced at court to the king, who is now a widower, and while making a stately procession past an array of bowing flunkies at Versailles, Louis is struck by Jeanne's beauty. He is impressed by the fearless, and yet somehow satirical way she meets his gaze, and curtsies in the way demonstrated by the Duchess of Sussex in the Netflix docuseries.



The director, Maïwenn, in the title role with Johnny Depp as Louis XV

The essential silliness of the film is part of its watchability, though perhaps Maïwenn is never quite sure how to handle Depp. Without this casting - though Depp is good enough for it not to be simply stunt casting - Louis XV would just be an unsexy old guy, the royal sugar daddy, and much more emphasis would be placed on Jeanne's political strategising. The presence of the preening Depp insists on more than that - but Louis and Jeanne are not entirely credible as a love story, perhaps because of the cynicism in which they are both complicit and perhaps because the performances are a little opaque. It's an entertaining spectacle, only partly aware of its own vanity.

News
War in Ukraine









▲ *A Kyiv firefighter, above, tackles a fire caused by a downed Russian rocket; far left, fragments of a missile in the zoo; left, civilians take shelter in the outskirts of the capital*
PHOTOGRAPH: AP

Russia's most powerful hypersonic weapons neutralised – Ukraine

Continued *from page 1*

withdrawn entirely depending on the level of damage sustained. An assessment was under way, they added.

The attack on Kyiv was one of the biggest assaults since last year's invasion began and followed Volodymyr Zelenskiy's three-day trip to Europe. During meetings in London, Berlin, Paris and Rome, Ukraine's president secured promises of more military assistance, including long-range attack drones from the UK.

Russia's furious response came at 2.30am local time. Emergency sirens woke residents. Soon afterwards there were loud booms as Ukrainian air defences engaged incoming missiles. Tracer fire illuminated the sky and car alarms went off. There were growling explosions. A further air raid warning sounded at 4am.

Yesterday, the ministry of defence in Moscow said it had destroyed a US-supplied Patriot air defence battery. Serious damage to a Patriot would be a major blow to Ukraine's air defences. Two Patriots, donated by the US and Germany, arrived in the country in April and have already been targeted previously by Russian missiles in an effort to eliminate them.

Although considered particularly effective, the Patriot is a relatively static air defence system and potentially vulnerable to high-speed missiles.

"We have received very powerful air defence systems from our western partners. They work against air dynamic targets. The Kinzhal X-47 missiles, which used to terrorise us, are not so scary any more," Ihnat said.

The raid was "unique" in its use of six Kinzhals from an estimated reserve of "about 50". "The enemy has used a relatively big number of them," he added.

The combined attack in the early hours of yesterday featured Shahed loitering drones arriving from the north, Kinzhals launched by MiG-31K fighter jets in the east and Kalibr missiles fired by Russian warships stationed in the Black Sea, he said.

The shooting down of the Kinzhals, if confirmed, would be a powerful demonstration of the effectiveness of the newly deployed air defences supplied by the west.

After a sleepless night during which many people sought refuge in bomb shelters, Kyiv's mayor, Vitali Klitschko, issued an update on damage. He said there were three victims in the Solomyan district, which was hit by falling rocket debris.

Debris also fell on the suburbs of Darnytskyi and Obolonskyi, he said, as well as on Kyiv zoo. The zoo's director, Kirill Trantin, said the remains of a shot-down rocket sliced through trees and landed next to enclosures containing vultures and a family of raccoons. He said he was a few hundred metres away at the time and had taken cover in a shelter with 20 other members of staff.

"It was 2.50am. We heard a boom. It was very loud and very bright. There was no fire and fortunately no humans or animals were hurt. Police arrived and took away a part of the missile," he told the Guardian. "The Russians don't give a shit for the law or international norms. We've held on for over a year. We will beat them."

By morning the debris had been swept up, with the zoo opening to visitors as usual at 10am. The animals did not appear distressed but would be monitored over the coming days and if necessary given anti-depressants in their water, the director said. In the meantime they would get extra apples and nuts.

Trantin said Russia's goal was to punish and terrify Ukraine's civilian population into submission. He said 10 of his zoo colleagues were fighting with the Ukrainian army, including three in the city of Bakhmut.

According to US officials, who spoke to CNN, Moscow has been trying to knock out the Patriot systems.

Zelenskiy said he had received "important and powerful" pledges of military aid during his European trip. In his conversations with Rishi Sunak, Zelenskiy pushed for a fighter jet coalition to supply Kyiv with modern planes. Both the UK and France announced they would soon start training Ukrainian pilots, and would work with other countries on the delivery of F-16 jets.

Yesterday, Ihnat described F-16s as Ukraine's fighter jet of choice. They can destroy cruise missiles and drones and would support Ukraine's troops in a counteroffensive, expected this summer, involving newly formed brigades equipped with western battle tanks and armoured fighting vehicles. "F-16s will protect us from air terrorism by Russia," he said.

Writing on Twitter, the UK's ambassador in Kyiv, Dame Melinda Simmons, described the Russian

> ***'The Russians don't give a shit for the law or international norms. We've held on for over a year. We will beat them'***
>
> **Kirill Trantin**
> *Director of Kyiv zoo*



▲ *Spectacular fireworks from a missile exploding in the sky over Kyiv in the early hours of yesterday*
PHOTOGRAPH: GLEB GARANICH/REUTERS

bombardment of the capital as "full on" and "pretty intense". She had just returned to Ukraine from the UK, where she accompanied Zelenskiy, who held talks on Monday with the prime minister in Chequers.

The attack follows the provision by the UK government of long-range Storm Shadow missiles, which have a range of more than 150 miles (250km), and a pledge to deliver long-range attack drones soon. The Kremlin has called the move "extremely negative" amid evidence Kyiv is already using Storm Shadows to hit Russian command and control centres away from the frontline.

Ukraine's defence minister, Oleksii Reznikov, praised the "unbelievable success" of his air forces in the early hours of yesterday. "Russian terrorists have no chance of prevailing over Ukraine. Their weapons can and should be countered by western ones," he wrote.

Fighting meanwhile continued in eastern Ukraine.

The deputy defence minister, Ganna Malyar, yesterday said Ukraine had pushed Russian forces from the flanks of Bakhmut but conceded that Moscow's forces were pushing deeper inside the embattled city.

Analysis
Dan Sabbagh



Zelenskiy's tour of Europe was successful, but west's gifts may not be enough

Even by Volodymyr Zelenskiy's standards, the Ukrainian president's high-speed trip round Europe's main capitals was successful. A trip to Berlin extracted a commitment to supply €2.7bn (£2.3bn) more arms, Paris offered more troop training and light tanks, and London pilot training and long-range drones.

The supply of western weapons is what gives Kyiv its best hope of kicking out the Russian invaders, a point underlined by Moscow's overnight bombing of Kyiv. All 18 missiles apparently aimed at US-made Patriot air defence systems were knocked out and casualties appear to be minimal.

It is not certain how Ukraine shot back but, with supplies of missiles for its local S-300 and Buk systems running short, it is likely to be with western air defence systems, whether US-Norwegian NASAMS, a Franco-Italian SAMP/T, Germany's IRIS-T or the two Patriot systems from the US and Germany that began arriving in the country in mid-April.

But the question remains: is Ukraine getting enough arms to have a chance to win the war decisively? A partial answer will come whenever it launches its already anticipated counterattack, although wisely, Zelenskiy was saying "we really need some more time" as he met Rishi Sunak at Chequers on Monday.

Some of the latest European gifts are for use now. Most notable is the cache of British Storm Shadow missiles, announced last week, just before Zelenskiy's tour. They are likely to number a few dozen, with a range (probably over 300km) that will make anywhere in Russian-occupied Ukraine a target. But most of the latest promises are for later this year.

That means, in military terms, the deeper meaning of Zelenskiy's tour was that whatever the west has promised may not yet be enough – and that it is necessary to secure a pipeline of future supply throughout 2023, in case the initial phase of the counterstrike underwhelms or misfires.

Germany's promise of a gift of €2.7bn worth of weapons essentially matches the UK's existing commitment to provide £2.3bn this year. It reconfirms the *Zeitenwende* (times-turning) foreign policy announced by the chancellor, Olaf Scholz, shortly after the start of the invasion, and Zelenskiy's presence in Berlin shows that after months of initial frustration with the pace of arms delivery, relations are now positive.

More interesting, though, was the quiet emphasis on the need for Ukraine to secure new fighter jets in the UK and France. Absent on this trip was Zelenskiy's showmanship. On a visit to the UK in February, the Ukrainian leader asked for "wings for freedom" in an address at Westminster, handing the Commons speaker, Lindsay Hoyle, a pilot's helmet to underline the point. That was accompanied by an unlikely demand for European Typhoon jets – never thought ideal for Ukraine's needs – which has long been quietly dropped. This time, Zelenskiy talked in a more low-key way at the Chequers country retreat about building a "jets coalition", meaning an effort to gently persuade the White House to approve the gift of US-made F-16s.

Sunak immediately pronounced himself on board, committing the UK to help with "training of pilots and all the logistics" to build up a cadre of pilots ready to fly an F-16. Overnight, the French president, Emmanuel Macron, who had seen Zelenskiy between Scholz and Sunak, said his country was also involved: "We have opened the door to training pilots, and this with several other European countries."

Scholz dodged the question at a press conference in Berlin, and, at least for now, the US shows no sign of changing its stance. But Nato's next annual summit is due in mid-July (and a G7 meeting is coming at the end of the week), which may help concentrate the minds of the reluctant. It is not obvious that Ukraine's small surviving air force can survive a long war.

European military backing will not alone be enough for Kyiv to defeat the Russian invaders, given that the largest single contributor, by some distance, is the US. Washington has pledged $36.9bn (£30bn) in arms since the invasion began in February 2022, including a further $1.2bn a week ago.

But at a time when Donald Trump's re-emergence reminds Kyiv that full-throated US support cannot be guaranteed after the next presidential election, shoring up key European allies ahead of the early summer round of international summits makes good strategic sense.

▼ *Rishi Sunak also urged Council of Europe members to cooperate over tackling 'illegal' migration*
PHOTOGRAPH: ALASTAIR GRANT/GETTY IMAGES



Rishi Sunak
PM and Dutch leader seek coalition to supply F-16s

Ben Quinn
Jennifer Rankin

Rishi Sunak has agreed with the Dutch leader, Mark Rutte, to seek an "international coalition" to offer support in procuring F-16 jets for Ukraine, Downing Street said yesterday.

The two prime ministers also reflected on "the importance of working together to tackle shared challenges such as illegal migration" and people trafficking in Europe, according to No 10.

A spokesman said: "The prime minister and prime minister Rutte agreed they would work to build an international coalition to provide Ukraine with combat air capabilities, supporting with everything from training to procuring F-16 jets."

Sunak also used his centre stage spot at the opening of the Council of Europe in Reykjavik last night to push for cooperation to tackle "illegal" migration, as he seeks to reassert his authority over the restless right of his party.

He sought to enlist the support of European leaders for his plans to detain and remove illegal immigrants – linking what he said were "lessons" of the Ukraine war to the need to confront other threats such as illegal migration.



▲ *Ursula von der Leyen is stepping up calls to prosecute Russia*

"We must learn the lessons of this war by being prepared to confront threats to our societies before they become too big to deal with. That includes acting on cybersecurity and AI, and it means tackling illegal migration," he said.

Downing Street earlier hailed an agreement reached between Sunak and the EU Commission president, Ursula von der Leyen, to "strengthen co-operation" between the EU and UK on migration.

The arrangement would see British agencies working together with Frontex, the EU border force, on "critical operational and strategic challenges including the situation in the Channel", a spokesperson said.

Earlier, Von der Leyen stepped up calls for a special tribunal to try Russia for its invasion of Ukraine.

Speaking ahead of the Reykjavik summit, she said that "accountability of Russia for the crime of aggression" would be a big topic.

Earlier this week, she promised to "strongly support the creation of a dedicated tribunal to bring Russia's crime of aggression to trial".

Leaders from across the continent met in the Icelandic capital for the Council of Europe summit, only the fourth in the body's 74-year history.

Russia was expelled from the group last March after the full-scale invasion of Ukraine. Moscow had announced its intention to withdraw from the continent's leading human rights body the day before its expulsion, after the Council of Europe's parliamentary assembly called for its withdrawal.

Ukraine, backed by the European commission and several member states, has led calls for a special tribunal to try Vladimir Putin and his top officials.

The commission last year set out two options to hold Putin to account: an international tribunal based on a multilateral treaty or a special hybrid court integrated into a national justice system with international judges.

EU officials think both options would require UN support and hope to win backing in the general assembly, recognising that Russia – a veto-wielding member of the security council – would block any such idea.

The international criminal court (ICC) in The Hague has issued an arrest warrant for Putin and other senior Russian officials over the abduction of Ukrainian children.

Supporters of a special tribunal argue that it needs to be set up urgently while the war rages, arguing it could have a cooling effect on atrocities committed by invading forces.

Truss's Taiwan trip a 'dangerous stunt', says Chinese embassy

Nadeem Badshah

Liz Truss's trip to Taiwan this week is a "dangerous political stunt", the Chinese embassy in London has said, as the former prime minister prepares to call on Rishi Sunak to declare Beijing a "threat" to UK security.

She is expected to use a speech in Taipei City today to challenge the prime minister to deliver on his rhetoric during last summer's Conservative party leadership contest, when he declared China "the biggest long-term threat to Britain". He also promised to close all 30 of the UK's Confucius Institutes, which promote Chinese culture on campus in higher education and in some schools.

According to a pre-briefed extract of her speech to the Prospect Foundation, Truss is expected to say: "Last summer the now British prime minister described China as 'the biggest long-term threat to Britain', and said the Confucius Institutes should be closed. He was right and we need to see those policies enacted urgently.

"The UK's integrated review needs to be amended to state clearly that China is a threat. Confucius Institutes should be closed down immediately. Instead, the service could be provided by organisations with the support of Hong Kong nationals and Taiwanese nationals who have come to the UK, on a free basis."

A spokesperson for the Chinese embassy in London said Truss's visit to Taiwan was a "dangerous political show which will do nothing but harm to the UK". The statement on the embassy website added: "We urge the relevant British politician to correct her wrongdoing, stop making political shows with the Taiwan question and stop conniving at and supporting 'Taiwan independence' secessionist forces."

Truss is the most senior British politician to visit the country since Margaret Thatcher in the 1990s, and



▲ *Truss is the most senior British politician to visit Taiwan since Thatcher in the 1990s* PHOTOGRAPH: TAIWAN MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS/EPA

> *'[Truss's trip to Taiwan] is a dangerous political show, which will do nohing but harm the UK'*
>
> **Chinese embassy**

is visiting at a time when relations between Britain and China have been at their most fractious in decades.

Truss is also expected to urge the west not to work with China, warning that totalitarian regimes "don't tell the truth". "There are still too many in the west who are trying to cling on to the idea that we can cooperate with China on issues like climate change, as if there is nothing wrong; that there are bigger issues than Chinese global dominance or the future of freedom and democracy. But without freedom and democracy there is nothing else."

Taiwan and China split in 1949 after a civil war that saw the Communist party gain control of the mainland. The island has never been part of the People's Republic of China but Beijing has insisted it must unite with the mainland, by force if necessary.

A UK government spokesperson said it was in Britain's interests to "continue engagement" with China while recognising the challenges the country presents, adding: "We have always been clear that China remains the biggest state-based threat to the UK's economic security. That's why our integrated review refresh sets out a new approach to dealing with the challenge which China presents for the UK and the wider world."



Representative Example	Duration of Device Plan	Upfront Cost	Monthly Device Payment	Credit Amount	Total amount payable for device	Interest rate (fixed)	Representative APR	Cash price (to buy outright)	Airtime Plan until March 2024	Airtime Plan April 2024 - March 2025	Airtime Plan April 2025 - March 2026
iPhone 14 Pro Max 128GB	36 months	£30	£25.84	£930.02	£960.02	0%	0%	£960.02	£28.99	£28.99 + RPI announced in Feb 2024 = Price A	Price A + RPI announced in Feb 2025

***Each year your Airtime Plan will be increased by the Retail Price Index (RPI) rate of inflation announced in February plus 3.9%. If RPI is negative, we'll only apply the 3.9%. You'll see this increase on your April 2024 bill onwards. See o2.co.uk/prices.**
£252 saving achieved by £7 per month discount on the unlimited plus Airtime Plan over 36 months. Offer ends 31 May 2023. £25.84 Device Plan for 36 months and £28.99 monthly rolling Airtime Plan. £30 upfront. Purchase the iPhone 14 Pro Max 128GB directly from O2 and save up to £9.16 a month on your new device plan when you trade in an iPhone. £25.84 per month achieved by trading in your old iPhone device and receiving up to £330.00 in trade in value, spread across a 36 month device plan. Quoted monthly saving may be adjusted if the trade-in device received by us differs from the submitted device description. Trade-in value based on payable amount on all traded in iPhones between January 2021 and December 2021. £35.01 monthly device plan cost for non trade in customers. Your device must pass our checklist. The value of your trade in will depend on the model and condition. Terms apply, see https://www.o2.co.uk/termsandconditions/mobile/o2-recycle. **O2 Refresh custom plans:** Direct purchases only. Pay the cash price for your device or spread the cost over 3 to 36 months (excludes dongles). The device cost will be the same whatever you choose. There may be an upfront cost. You can pay off your Device Plan at any time and choose to keep your Airtime Plan, upgrade it, or leave. If you are in the first 24 months of your Device Plan and you cancel your Airtime Plan you will have to pay the remainder of your Device Plan in full. After 24 months you can keep your Airtime Plan, upgrade it, or end it without affecting your Device Plan. Devices subject to availability. 0% APR. Finance subject to status and credit checks. 18+. Direct Debit. Credit provided by Telefónica UK Ltd, SL1 4DX. Telefónica UK is authorised and regulated by the FCA for consumer credit and insurance. Terms apply, see o2.co.uk/terms **O2 Switch Up:** New & upgrading customers on an O2 Custom Plan (bolt-on charged at £3.99 a month) or Plus Plan tariff (charge included within plan). Subject to availability, status, credit checks & payment by direct debit. This may only be added at POS or within 14 days of purchase/upgrade, it may be cancelled at any point & will be removed automatically if existing device plan is paid off. Eligible customers may swap their existing handset at any time via an O2 store, subject to device condition. Customers may only take out a new Customer Plan or Plus Plan following a successful device swap. New contract price may be higher than existing depending on plan chosen. Customers not eligible for O2 Recycle offers when using O2 Switch Up. For full terms; o2.co.uk/termsandconditions/mobile/o2-switch-up

University of Oxford severs ties with Sacklers over opioid links

Richard Adams
Education editor

The University of Oxford is cutting its ties with the Sackler family, whose wealth came from addictive opioid drugs - removing their name from buildings, galleries and positions funded through their donations.

The university's governing council approved the measure to strip the name from two galleries in the Ashmolean Museum and a university library, as well as several staff positions, after an investigation by its new vice-chancellor, Prof Irene Tracey.

The move follows sustained criticism of Oxford's retention of the name as major institutions including the British Museum and the V&A removed Sackler titles after recognition that the funding was connected with the family's ownership of the now bankrupt Purdue Pharma, manufacturers of the addictive OxyContin painkiller.

“Oxford University has undertaken a review of its relationship with the Sackler family and their trusts, including the way their benefactions to the university are recognised,” it said, adding: “Following this review, the university has decided the buildings, spaces and staff positions using the Sackler name will no longer do so. These review outcomes have had the full support of the Sackler family.”

As part of the decision, the Sackler library is renamed the Bodleian Art, Archaeology and Ancient World Library. Three staff posts supported by the family's donations will also drop the Sackler title, including the Ashmolean's keeper of antiquities.



▲ *The Sackler library in Oxford will be renamed as part of the overhaul*

The university also said that “all donations received from the Sackler family and their trusts will be retained by the university for their intended educational purposes. No new donations have been received from either the family or their trusts since January 2019.”

However, it will retain recognition of the Sackler gifts on a plaque at its Clarendon building and on the Ashmolean Museum's donor board “for the purposes of historical recording of donations to the university”.

Tracey, a professor of neuroscience who specialises in pain perception and anaesthetics, launched the review before the Financial Times revealed in February that the university maintained its links with the Sackler family, extending invitations to events such as the Oxford-Cambridge boat race, and continuing to accept donations even as Purdue became embroiled in legal action over its role in the US's deadly epidemic of opioid addiction.

In 2019 the Louvre in Paris removed the Sackler title from the museum's oriental antiquities wing, while the Serpentine Gallery said it would no longer accept donations from Sackler trusts. Other institutions followed, including New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art in 2021.

Last year George Osborne, chair of the British Museum, announced that it would remove the Sackler name from all galleries, rooms and endowments supported by the family's trusts, saying it was time to move “into a new era”.



▶ *Firefighters extinguish the blaze in Wimborne. Far right, nurse Lisa Dodds raised the alarm when she arrived home from her shift*
PHOTOGRAPH: MAX WILLCOCKS/BNPS



Night of fire Trail of arson strikes fear in Wimborne

Steven Morris

‘Shocking, isn't it?” said hairdresser Jackie Shearing, gazing at the burnt-out shell of a hatchback wedged in a passageway close to the centre of Wimborne Minster. “This is such a dozy old town, nothing ever happens here.”

The day before, something certainly had happened. The Dorset town awoke to find it had been caught up in a series of arson attacks, which wrecked 13 cars in the area, damaged a historic building and left residents trying to save themselves and their vehicles.

Yesterday police carried out forensics tests on the vehicles, got on with door-to-door inquiries and tried to work out who had caused the damage and why.

The smell of burning remained in the air as residents of Wimborne, which has a magnificent minster church and was once home to Thomas Hardy, expressed bafflement and anger. Some thought the swiftness of the attacks, which took place over three hours on Sunday night to Monday morning, meant it must be the work of a gang. Others thought an individual might have used an old railway line, the Castleman Trailway, to navigate, hidden in the trees. “If it was one person, he was very organised,” said Paul Dear, who spent 20 years in the fire service. “He knew what he was doing. He was in and out.”

The hero of the hour was nurse Lisa Dodd, who arrived home in the early hours of Monday and saw a Nissan Micra ablaze in the passageway. A mother and two daughters had just moved into a flat with a door to the passage and were asleep 2 metres from the blaze.

“The light seemed a bit off and when I looked out I saw the bonnet of the car on fire,” Dodd said. “I knew that there was a sleeping family in the room next to the fire and I was worried that the car would explode. I ran out to wake them up and get them out.”

The family squeezed out through a gap between their door and the car. “If the engine had exploded and set the door on fire there would have been no way out,” said Dodd.

“It doesn't bear thinking about what could have happened. This isn't just some senseless vandalism. This is something else.”

The fire also damaged timbers in the listed building but that was the least of residents' worries. Florist Keith Dorling dropped off flowers to Lisa's doorstep. “As a thank you from the community,” he said. “Someone could have been killed.”

Geography suggests the attacks were random, residents say. They began about 3 miles south (an 11-minute drive, 50-minute walk) in the village of Broadstone in Poole, where a Ford Focus was set on fire between the tennis and golf clubs. It was parked next to a break in the fence on the Castleman Trailway. The second attack was about 2 miles away at Oakley Hill - close to the trailway.

The arsonist or arsonists might then have crossed the River Stour into Wimborne where cars were set on fire in the New Borough Road area. Paul Russell, 55, dashed out of his flat to move his brand new Hyundai, which was parked beside a burning vehicle. “I grew up in Northern Ireland in the 1970s and 80s and haven't seen anything like this since then,” he said.

One resident, who asked not to be named, said his CCTV had caught an alleged suspect. “He had his jacket over his head,” he said. “He bent down next to the car. He put something under the car and then walked off down the road. It didn't take long for whatever it was to go off.” He has given the footage to the police who appealed for witnesses on Monday but made no comment yesterday.

“A couple of regulars lost their cars,” said Melissa Cox, the assistant manager of the Coach and Horses pub. I think it's fair to say everyone is on tenterhooks.”

‘This is such a dozy old town, nothing ever happens here’

Jackie Shearing
Wimborne hairdresser



Intruder tries to take photos of 2:22 cast in West End dressing room

Chris Wiegand
Stage editor

The new star of the West End play 2:22: A Ghost Story has condemned an attempt to take illicit photographs of actors in their dressing room.

The thriller, which has been staged at several London theatres over the past two years, had its first preview at the Apollo on Sunday with a new cast led by American actor Sophia Bush, best known from One Tree Hill.

On social media, Bush said during before that performance “a man stuck a camera in the window of our ladies' dressing room”. Later, the same individual “shoved his camera through our curtains” before a member of the production was able to intervene, and the intruder fled.

Bush said the incident “colours a beautiful night with something ugly and scary and sad”. She continued: “Thanks to everyone who showed up with love. To the predatory guy? Fuck you very much. I hope someone there for our opening might be able to help us figure out who you are … you deserve to be caught.”

A statement from the show's producers expressed anger that “a member of the public tried to take photos of cast members in a private space” before the 6pm performance. The new cast for Danny Robins's play also includes Jaime Winstone, Ricky Champ and Clifford Samuel.

The production company, Runaway Entertainment, is working with the Apollo to increase security measures. “It is sad that the actions of one unscrupulous person may have an impact on how our cast feels able to engage with audiences at the theatre,” it said, adding that it welcomes “everyone who comes to see the show as respectful, enthusiastic audience members”. A representative for the production said there was “no real evidence” the photographer was from the paparazzi.

The inappropriate use of mobile phones in theatres was one of the many examples of antisocial behaviour given in a recent survey of more than 1,500 people working in UK theatrical venues. In the poll by the Broadcasting, Entertainment, Communications and Theatre Union (Bectu), 90% of respondents reported that they had directly experienced or witnessed poor audience behaviour. Nearly half said they had thought about leaving the industry as a result. Bectu has called for venues across the UK to sign up to a new charter to help protect workers.

In March, naked photos were taken of the actor James Norton on stage in A Little Life and published on MailOnline, prompting widespread outrage.

That production is one of several to provide theatregoers with stickers to cover their cameraphones.

Children in England leapfrog to fourth place in literacy league table

Sally Weale
Richard Adams

England's nine and 10-year-olds have taken fourth place in an international literacy study comparing the reading ability of children of the same age in 43 countries, up from joint eighth place last time assessments took place.

English pupils leapfrogged those in high-performing countries like Finland and Poland, while pupils in Singapore topped the league table, followed by Hong Kong and Russia.

Despite the improved ranking, England's score was little changed since the last round of assessments in the Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (Pirls), which took place in 2016, with its average dropping marginally from 559 to 558.

Other countries' scores fell significantly over a period of widespread disruption to education due to the Covid pandemic. Only 11 of the 43 countries that tested pupils of the same age in Pirls 2021 avoided significant declines, including England.

Finland's score fell from 566 in 2016 to 549, and Poland's from 565 to 549, still well above the international average of 520 and 524 in Europe. At the top of the table Singapore achieved an average score of 587, Hong Kong 573 and Russia 567.

Yesterday's results were welcomed by Rishi Sunak, who said: "Driving up literacy rates is central to our plan to grow the economy, one of my five key priorities, so it's great to see England move up to fourth in the international rankings for reading."



▲ *Primary school children reading. Teachers won praise for a 'significant achievement' despite the pandemic*
PHOTOGRAPH: MARC HILL/ALAMY

The government highlighted a narrowing in the attainment gap between the highest and lowest performing pupils, and between boys and girls, apparently due to a slight fall in girls' average scores. "While there is always more progress to be made, pupils and teachers across the country should be incredibly proud of this achievement today," said the prime minister.

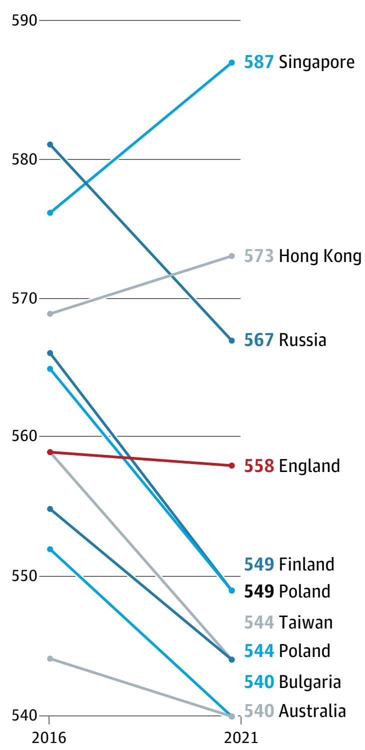
The schools minister, Nick Gibb, said England's success followed the introduction of the phonics screening check in 2012 and in 2018 the English hubs programme to develop expertise in teaching of reading.

Dr Dirk Hastedt, the executive director of the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA), which administers Pirls, said: "Teachers in England obviously did a good job despite Covid. They were among the countries without losses. That's a significant achievement."

Jon Andrews, the head of analysis at the Education Policy Institute, said: "Today's Pirls results resonate with our own findings that outcomes in reading have been recovered to their pre-pandemic levels. However, our analysis also suggests that in maths, primary school pupils remain around one and a half months behind pre-pandemic norms in their learning."

Geoff Barton, the general secretary of the Association of School and College Leaders, said: "This is a badly needed piece of good news for an education system that feels beleaguered. These excellent results in reading standards of nine to 10-year-olds are testament to the hard work, skill and dedication of primary school teachers and leaders."

Reading ability in England decreased marginally over the pandemic period compared with other high-scoring countries
Achievement score among primary school pupils age nine or 10



Source: Pirls 2021. Note: filtered by top 10 for 2021. Students assessed at end of school year



Weight gain in early life increases risk of prostate cancer death by 27%, study finds

Tobi Thomas

Men who put on two stone before turning 30 are 27% more likely to die from prostate cancer in old age than those who maintain their teenage weight, early research suggests.

A decades-long study into more than 250,000 Swedish men indicated there was a strong link between men gaining weight across their healthiest years and developing prostate cancer.

The study found those who gained at least half a kilogram a year (1.1lbs) from 17 to 60 had a 10% greater risk of aggressive prostate cancer and a 29% greater risk of fatal prostate cancer.

But gaining weight more steeply puts you at a similar risk. A man putting on 13kg (28lbs) between the ages of 17 and 29 is associated with a 13% increased risk of aggressive prostate cancer and a 27% increased risk of fatal prostate cancer.

The findings, which are yet to be peer reviewed, were part of the Obesity and Disease Development Sweden study from 1963-2014. Researchers analysed the data of Swedish men who had had their weight measured at least three times between the ages of 17 and 60.

"We do not know if it is the weight gain itself or the long duration of being heavier that is the main driver of the association that we see," said Dr Marisa da Silva, of the Department of Translational Medicine at Lund University. "Nevertheless, one must gain weight to become heavier, so preventing a steep increase in weight in young men is imperative for the prevention of prostate cancer."

Of the 258,477 Swedish men who had taken part of the study, 23,348 participants were diagnosed with prostate cancer, with an average age at diagnosis of 70 years, with 4,790 men dying from the disease.

With more than 1.4m cases diagnosed every year, prostate cancer is the most common cancer occurring in men worldwide. In the UK, one in six men are diagnosed with the disease in their lifetime.

Almost 12,000 men a year die from the disease in the UK, and African-Caribbean men in the UK are almost twice as likely to die from the disease compared with their white counterparts.

Although many prostate cancers are slow-growing and may not cause a man harm during his lifetime, with 8 in 10 men diagnosed in England living for at least 10 years after diagnosis, others can be more aggressive and harder to treat.

Previous research has suggested a strong link between excess body fat increases and the risk of aggressive and fatal prostate cancer. Da Silva said: "Previous research has implicated elevated concentrations of insulin-like growth factor-1 (IGF-1), a hormone that is involved in cell growth and development, with an increased risk of prostate cancer.

"Levels of this hormone are raised in people with obesity and a steep increase in weight may fuel this elevation and the development of the cancer."

Simon Grieveson, assistant director of research at Prostate Cancer UK, said the study built on previous research which indicated a possible correlation between being overweight and aggressive prostate cancer. "While these results are intriguing, more research is needed to fully understand the biological link between obesity and prostate cancer – and, most importantly, how we can use this information to improve outcomes for men.

"Maintaining a healthy weight can protect against many cancers, but it is important to remember that prostate cancer can affect men of all weights, shapes, and sizes."

Half of all pizzas have all the salt we should eat in a day, data shows

Denis Campbell
Health policy editor

Half of the pizzas eaten in Britain contain all of the salt we should eat in a day, new research reveals.

Analysis by government scientists of 1,387 different pizzas bought in shops, supermarkets, takeaways and restaurants shows one of the Domino's range contains more than three days' worth of salt.

Its sizzler standard mozzarella stuffed crust medium pizza emerged as the UK's saltiest pizza in the nutritional research. It contained 21.4g of salt, which makes it saltier than seawater. In contrast, the maximum daily intake, as recommended by the Scientific Advisory Committee on Nutrition (SACN), is just 6g.

However, average consumption remains about 8.4g – 40% higher than the official target.

Health experts said the high levels of salt in one of the country's favourite foods is worrying because it leads to high blood pressure, which is the top cause of heart attacks and strokes.

Action on Salt, the scientific research group that carried out the analysis, warned the sheer amount of the substance they found in many varieties of pizza showed the government's repeated appeals to the food industry to use less had not worked.

Indeed, some brands of pizza now contain even more salt than they did when Action on Salt undertook a similar study in 2014 – which it condemned as "a disgrace". For example, the salt content of Domino's tandoori hot standard mozzarella thin and crispy crust pizza has risen over that time from 5.3g to 14.4g.



▲ *Pizzas from takeaways such as Domino's contain more than double the salt found in shop-bought ones*
PHOTOGRAPH: DOMINO'S



Sonia Pombo, a registered nutritionist who is the group's campaign lead, said: "Despite our reliance on the food industry to provide us with access to better, healthier options, it's infuriating to see some companies ignoring the overwhelming evidence in support of salt reduction, and worse still, increasing the salt content further."

Pizza manufacturers doing that "are showing a complete disregard for public health and are making a mockery of our voluntary reformulation programme", she added.

The salt content of pizzas and other foods is so damaging to health that ministers should extend the principle of the sugar tax to it as well, to compel firms to make less-salty products, the group said.

Graham MacGregor, a professor of cardiovascular medicine at Queen Mary University of London who is the chair of Action on Salt, cited Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) research showing that reducing salt intake by 1g a day could save 4,000 lives a year.

Takeaway pizzas contain more than double the amount of salt found in supermarket-bought ones. Two-thirds of pizzas sold in restaurants and takeaways have 6g or more.

Zizzi, Franco Manca and Crosta & Mollica are the retailers and manufacturers with the saltiest pizzas per 100g, while Domino's, Papa John's and Caprinos are the worst offenders in the restaurant and takeaway sector, Action on Salt found.

However, it also identified the brands with the smallest amounts of salt per 100g. Among retailers and manufacturers, those are Goodfella's, Morrisons and the Co-op, and among restaurant and takeaway operators they are Bella Italia, Pizza Express and Fireaway.

Tiredness the key barrier to healthy lifestyle, UK survey finds

Continued *from page 1*

what was stopping them from eating more healthily and exercising more often, 29% of men and 40% of women cited "feeling too tired".

Even more put it down to "lack of motivation" (38%). Other common reasons given included the cost of food (30%), lack of time (26%) and work-life balance (25%). Others cited the cost of exercising (25%), such as buying a gym membership or equipment, lack of confidence (16%) and "not knowing where to start" (12%).

Only one in four (24%) in the representative sample of the British population surveyed online said nothing prevented them from making healthy changes to their lifestyle.

Matt Lambert, the charity's health information and promotion manager, said: "People have busy schedules and we know that, for many, the last thing they might want to do when they are tired or lacking in motivation is to start cooking from scratch or going to the gym." WCRF is launching an eight-week healthy living plan that it hopes will enable people to build healthier habits into their routine.

It said eating well and taking exercise were important ways of reducing people's risk of getting cancer and other diseases. One in two people will get cancer at some point in their lives.

The charity, and Cancer Research UK, estimate that 40% of all cases of cancer could be avoided if more people lived healthier lives, for example by eating more healthily, being active, maintaining a normal weight, avoiding sunburn and not smoking.

The Department of Health and Social Care said it was promoting healthier lifestyles, for example through its "better health – every mind matters" campaign launched last week. It encourages use of free apps, such as Couch to 5k and Active 10, to boost their activity levels.

National Politics

Speaker at NatCon echoes far-right antisemitic attacks in condemning 'globalists'

Peter Walker
Deputy political editor

One of the main speakers at a conference attended by two cabinet ministers and a series of other Conservative MPs has blamed "globalists" for the world's political problems, repeatedly using a term associated with the far right and antisemitic conspiracy theories.

Kevin Roberts, the president of the Heritage Foundation, a US thinktank, mentioned the idea, condemned by Jewish groups as an antisemitic trope, more than a dozen times in his address to the National Conservatism (NatCon) event in London.

Roberts also likened Brexit to the views of Donald Trump, Ron DeSantis and Viktor Orbán, and said leftwingers wanted to end all democracy to impose their opinions on the world.

While "globalist" can be a neutral term, its use as a term of abuse for over-powerful elites supposedly seeking global domination is closely associated with the far right and conspiracy theories about Jewish power.

Roberts repeatedly condemned what he called "the leftist control of globalist corporations and entities", seemingly indicating this was part of a conspiracy to end democracy, calling this "the gathering storm".

"The new left, greedy, elitist, woke and globalist, has foresworn every principle their ideological predecessors once espoused: democracy, equality, diversity, justice," said Roberts, whose thinktank is sometimes addressed by Conservative politicians in the US.

"It abhors religion, and Christianity especially, as well as the nation state, political accountability and even objective truth. Their goal is not to win political contests but to end them altogether - to sweep away dissent and any subversive institution that dares facilitate."

He went on: "This new left is not in competition. It is at war with the west, with the moral, intellectual and social foundations on which our entire civilisation rests. Which is why it reserves a singular hatred for the kind of conservatism represented by Donald Trump and Ron DeSantis, by Brexit, by Viktor Orbán and, yes, by this conference."

Speaking at the same event, the communities secretary, Michael Gove, cautioned against the combative language of culture wars used by many of his co-speakers. Asked in an onstage interview whether Conservatives needed to engage with such issues, Gove highlighted what he said were the virtues of "gentleness and stability and discourse". He said: "I think that the overwhelming majority of people in this country prefer



▲ *Michael Gove said a majority in UK preferred civility to culture wars*

civility. This goes to the whole question of the so-called culture war that is raging at the moment.

"There are certain principles you should defend, absolutely. And it is absolutely critical that we don't deny biological reality or that we don't feel that we should apologise for aspects of our past, which are genuine sources of pride. But we should do so with the self-confidence that means we don't need to be strident."

Gove said the changing media and social media landscape had helped increase the prominence of culture war issues. "The way in which algorithms work tends to drive people towards poles, and the way in which particular sections of the media work means that they tend to become echo chambers," he added.

But he argued voters were far more likely to judge parties and governments on other areas. "I actually think that economics is still central," Gove said. "When it comes to the boring and vulgar task of winning general elections, and the even more boring and even more dispiriting task of government, the most important thing to do is to concentrate on the right economic policies, the right policies for public service delivery and so on."

Gove's intervention comes a day after the home secretary, Suella Braverman, gave a speech at the same event which condemned "experts and elites" and "political correctness". Braverman devoted much of her speech to railing against what she said was an attempt by the left to devalue Britain's heritage, while Miriam Cates, the Tory MP for Penistone and Stocksbridge, said "cultural Marxism" was one reason for the UK's falling birthrate.

Gove, who was at pains to praise Braverman's call for a reduction in legal migration numbers, said such divergent views were "a sign that our party and our broader movement is healthy, that you can have debate".

However, he stressed the need for "recognising what is distinctive and cherished in Britain and in the United Kingdom", amid a conference which has seen other speakers praise Orbán and Trump.

"In some of the commentary that there has been around national conservatism, I think people are trying to suggest that this is somehow an attempt to import American ideas, American ideology and American conservatism into the UK," Gove said, saying this should not be the case.

He also dismissed the argument by Andrea Jenkyns, the Tory MP for Morley and Outwood, at a grassroots conference on Saturday, that many of her party colleagues would fit better in the Liberal Democrats. Gove said: "I can't think of a single Conservative who reminds me of Chris Huhne."

'Cultural Marxism'

Troubling associations of terms used at Tory gathering

A conference run by a rightwing US thinktank might be expected to feature robust discourse on culture wars and identity. But the National Conservatism gathering this week has gone notably further: with speeches using terms linked to antisemitism and the far right.

The debate over "cultural Marxists" and "globalists", as used by speakers at the gathering in Westminster is a microcosm of the wider jostling about the populist right and language.

Cultural Marxism, used as a term of abuse in a speech on Monday by the Tory MP Miriam Cates, has its origins in a conspiracy theory that Marxist scholars in interwar Germany, many of whom were Jewish, had devised a programme of progressive politics intended to undermine western democracies.

At the centre of the idea, said Dr Huw Davies, a sociologist at Edinburgh University, is that socialists aim to spread their credo by first taking over cultural and educational institutions.

Some on the right, Davies said, "think they've got political power, but they don't think they have cultural power. So they are looking for an explanation for that."

While there is little debate that the term cultural Marxism has antisemitic overtones and is linked to the far right, it is not uncommon for UK politicians to use it.

Suella Braverman, the home secretary, who also spoke at the National Conservatism event on Monday, was criticised by Jewish groups for doing so in 2019. The next year, 26 Tory MPs wrote a joint letter to the Telegraph accusing the National Trust of being beset by "cultural Marxist dogma".

Davies said: "They think it sort of gives them a sort of intellectual veneer of credibility … but it's only because they've been listening to rightwing academics who believe it's a valid theory.

"It should horrify them that it is in the manifestos of racist mass murderers like Anders Breivik. It's often accompanied by the language of disgust and disease, metaphors like it has 'infected' our schools and universities."

Not all agree, however. Yoram Hazony, the Israeli-US writer whose thinktank runs the conference, condemned "this attempt to smear a friend of the Jews, such as Miriam Cates, with the utterly preposterous accusation of antisemitism". He argued the term was "an apt phrase to describe the cultural agenda promoted by many on the left today".

"Globalist" is an arguably more ambiguous term, although experts and Jewish groups say its use as part of the notion that left-leaning institutions are seeking to take over the world is very often connected to antisemitic conspiracy theories, especially when tied to people such as the Jewish financier George Soros.

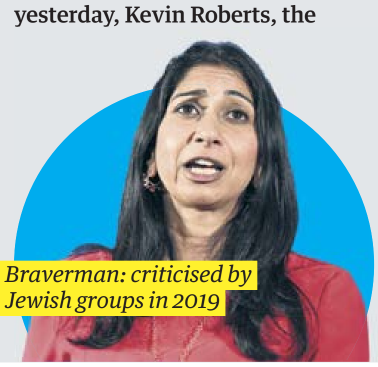
At the NatCon conference yesterday, Kevin Roberts, the president of the Heritage Foundation, a US thinktank, mentioned the globalist idea more than a dozen times, tying it into the notion that leftwing groups want to end democracy and impose their views.

The trope is a populist repurposing of leftwing criticism about economic globalisation and the increased power of corporations, says Davies, with the addition of conspiracy theories linking it to everything from Soros to the World Economic Forum and the United Nations.

The defence that it is a term that UK politicians or people such as Roberts could use innocently is not convincing, said Davies. "This is not hidden knowledge. I don't understand why you wouldn't be aware of it.

"And whether he is deliberately weaponising it, not following the full connotations, or using it naively, I'm not sure that matters to be honest, because the message is received by the right people."

Peter Walker



Braverman: criticised by Jewish groups in 2019



Farming

Downing Street food summit decried as 'PR stunt'

Joanna Partridge
Sarah Butler

Rishi Sunak's Downing Street food summit has been described as "empty" by industry representatives, who rounded on the prime minister for failing to discuss soaring inflation or set out measures to safeguard British food production.

The Farm to Fork summit, the first meeting of its kind, brought together farmers, food producers and some of Britain's largest supermarkets.

One representative of a trade body that attended described it as an "empty meeting" with no action on price or inflation discussed. "It was



▲ *British farming would be at the heart of future international trade deals, Rishi Sunak vowed in an open letter to farmers*

PHOTOGRAPH: JEREMY SELWYN/SELWYNPICS

there for the Tories to show they are supporting farmers," they said.

Another attender said the summit elicited a "low-key response" from those present because it "did not touch the fundamental problems of food price inflation". They said: "If you are not doing something about the cost of living, cost of production, access to labour and affordability of food then you are never going to fix the overall problem."

The summit had been expected to tackle food price inflation, fairness within the supply chain and helping farmers to invest in domestic production, but there were no subsequent announcements on those issues. Ministers offered no commitments in response to a call by the National Farmers' Union (NFU) to stop Britain's self-sufficiency in food slipping below its current level of 60%.

The summit took place against a backdrop of stubbornly high inflation, partly driven by food and drink prices, which rose 19.1% in the year to March, according to official figures.

In advance, consumer groups had called on ministers to ask grocery bosses to commit to holding down prices to help squeezed consumers, after an agreement by supermarkets in France to cap prices on key food items and a move by the French government to support producers.

Hours before the meeting, Sunak published an open letter to farmers, promising to put UK farming at the heart of future trade deals and vowing that chlorinated chicken and hormone-fed beef would not be allowed on to the UK market.

Sunak's pledges were welcomed by the NFU, which had repeatedly asked the prime minister to hold a food summit. The union's president has previously criticised the government for making farmers "a pawn in trade deals", including those struck with Australia and New Zealand by Sunak's predecessor, Liz Truss, during her time as international trade secretary.

Tom Bradshaw, the NFU's deputy president, said the union believed the government had "put food security on a par with energy security" at the summit, which he called "a big step forwards". He added that farmers had battled to get ministers to "deliver resilience to the food supply chain", which he hoped would help reverse recent falls in domestic production, as farmers have quit the industry amid soaring costs.

However, the government did not immediately answer the NFU's calls to make the summit an annual event.

19.1%

Inflation in the year to March, partly driven by food and drink prices, according to official figures

The meeting, which according to one person present was attended by between 60 and 70 people, began with a welcome from the prime minister, before participants took part in four separate discussion groups.

Richard Griffiths, the chief executive of the British Poultry Council, who attended the summit, believed the meeting represented only "a little step forward" for the food industry.

He welcomed the government's promises regarding future trade deals, but said promising to support producers in international deals without making plan on how to tackle food inflation "was like taking one corner of a big problem and trying to fix it without reference to the rest".

Lee Stiles, the secretary of the Lea Valley Growers' Association, described the food summit as "no more than a PR stunt" with "nothing of substance" to help growers.

Stiles, who was not at the meeting, called on the government to take action to help with labour shortages.

He described the current seasonal agricultural workers scheme as "not fit for purpose" because it only enables holders to work for six months, although workers are needed for almost twice that period, meaning that multiple groups need to be trained each year.

Stiles added: "The idea you can fill these roles with local workers is ridiculous and has been since the 1950s."

Sketch
John Crace



Mikey No Mates Gove is, for the first time, the most moderate person in the room

You might wonder what a cabinet minister is doing at a National Conservatism conference. A group of conspiracy theorists and populist weirdos that already assumes the Conservatives have failed and are fighting for the soul of the party in opposition. That most Tory MPs need to be deselected in favour of candidates with purer Conservative thoughts.

On Monday, Suella Braverman hadn't given it a second thought. No opportunity to stoke the culture wars should ever be passed up. A chance to meet her tribe, her fanbase. To stake a claim as a leader in waiting.

Michael Gove had clearly had his doubts. It may have seemed like a good idea when he was asked – he's easily flattered as his self-worth is through the floor these days. But now he found himself on stage at the Emmanuel Centre in London in front of an audience of a couple of hundred people, he wasn't quite so sure.

Time was when Gove was a player. Someone who made things happen. These days, he's a lost soul. No real friends anywhere. He just drifts aimlessly around Westminster. A man without real influence, surviving on a reputation for competence that doesn't bear close examination. Next stop oblivion.

So Mikey No Mates no longer had any skin in the game. There was nothing to be gained by indulging in some blue-on-blue attacks on his colleagues. All he could really do was try to talk his way through his half-hour interview with the Daily Telegraph's Madeline Grant without saying anything very much of interest. Certainly nothing that could get him into trouble with any of his colleagues. For the first time in his life, Gove was going to be the most moderate person in the room. Imagine that.

Time was when Gove was a player. Someone who made things happen. These days, he's a lost soul. He just drifts aimlessly around

To most people's horror, Gove began by declaring himself to be socially liberal. Cue a sharp intake of breath from an audience that had come to be pampered. To be love-bombed. To be told they were right. It was almost as if he was going out of his way to deliberately troll the Nat Cons. An impression heightened when he pointed out that being in power – running a government – was a wee bit more complicated than yelling mad shit from the sidelines.

Grant tried to play devil's advocate to liven things up a bit. But the Govester refused to play ball. Everything was wonderful. The government was wonderful and had performed heroically over the last 13 years, constantly reinventing itself to the delight of a lucky electorate. Rishi Sunak was wonderful. Boris Johnson was wonderful. Braverman was wonderful. Every Tory MP was wonderful. And the Nat Cons were simply adorable too. So sweet with their darling, populist fantasies.

Mikey No Mates did have one confession to make. It was really hard to get on the property ladder. No shit. Insight after insight. Pearl after pearl. Only this was the housing secretary as good as admitting that he had failed. However, he chose to blame the migrants. Bloody foreigners. Still, better to build one beautiful house than tens of thousands generic new builds. But no one raised an eyebrow or a complaint. Mainly because they were all dozing off. It had been a long few days being angry about everything.

Rental sector reform must close loopholes for unfair evictions, campaigners say

Robert Booth
Social affairs correspondent

Tenants and campaigners have warned Michael Gove not to create a "backdoor" for unfair evictions as private rented sector reforms are unveiled today.

The legal overhaul will ban "no fault" evictions but strengthen landlords' rights to throw tenants out for antisocial behaviour.

The housing secretary will announce the renters reform bill affecting 11 million private renters in England. "Too many renters are living in damp, unsafe, cold homes, powerless to put things right, and with the threat of sudden eviction hanging over them," he will say.

But after lobbying from landlords he will also "strengthen powers to evict antisocial tenants, broadening the disruptive and harmful activities that can lead to eviction and making it quicker to evict a tenant acting antisocially", his department said.

It could mean a two-week notice period for antisocial behaviour evictions and that any behaviour "capable" of "causing nuisance or annoyance" could trigger eviction.

The bill is expected to outlaw extreme rent increases targeted at pushing tenants out. This will be policed by a new ombudsman for private rented housing and the courts. It will not, however, limit the frequency with which landlords can hike rents or rent caps.

It comes four years after the government first promised to ban the 1988 no-fault eviction law, which has had a chilling effect on tenant's confidence to challenge non-decent homes, of which there are estimated to be 1m in England.

Since that promise was made by Theresa May and later repeated in the 2019 Conservative election manifesto under Boris Johnson, more than 54,000 households in the private rented sector in England have been threatened with a no-fault eviction and almost 17,000 households were evicted by bailiffs.

Gove will say: "Our new laws introduced to parliament today will support the vast majority of responsible landlords who provide quality homes to their tenants, while delivering our manifesto commitment to abolish section 21 'no-fault' evictions. This will ensure that everyone can live somewhere which is decent, safe and secure."

Keir Starmer is expected to announce today that a Labour government would reform the planning system and "bring back local housing targets". Labour will become the party of housebuilders, he pledged in an interview with the Times, announcing plans to loosen restrictions on building in the green belt to help boost local housing supply.

The renters reform bill looks set to be subject to fierce debate in parliament over definitions of antisocial behaviour and the policing and timing of new decency standards.

Basic decent homes standards, which already apply to social housing, will be introduced, although there is no timetable yet for when landlords should fix issues such as damp, cold and pests.

It comes as the private rented sector is in crisis. The number of households renting in England more than doubled between 2001 and 2021, the census showed, and demand for rentals after the pandemic is up 50% on the five-year average. This has coincided with a fall in the stock of rental homes, pushing the price of new lets up more than 11% in the year up to March, according to Zoopla.

Gove will also announce a new right for tenants to ask to live with a pet, which landlords "cannot unreasonably refuse", and will make it illegal to refuse tenancies to people on benefits or with children.

The London Renters Union said the bill was a "huge step forward for renters forced to live under the threat of 'no-fault' eviction" but said it would not bring total security. "Landlords could circumnavigate the new eviction ban by using large rent hikes and other 'backdoor' evictions to force unwanted tenants out," it said. The housing charity Shelter cautioned the bill must be "as strong as possible, with every loophole closed so that no renter can be unfairly evicted".

Toby Lloyd, who was a Downing Street housing adviser when May first pledged the ban on no-fault evictions, said "widening landlords' ability to gain possession over antisocial behaviour and non-payment of rent must not create another back door route to no fault evictions".

Ben Beadle, chief executive of the National Residential Landlords Association, warned that without assurance of repossession powers "the bill will only exacerbate the rental housing supply crisis many tenants now face".

> ***'[Strengthening landlords' rights] must not create another back door route to no-fault evictions'***
>
> **Toby Lloyd**
> *Former housing adviser*



Tenants 'Landlords can get away with anything'

Robert Booth

The government promised to ban no-fault evictions in its 2019 election manifesto and a renters reform bill was included in the December 2019 Queen's speech, but it did not materialise until this week.

In the meantime, thousands of households were evicted after being served a section 21 notice, which the new bill finally proposes to ban. Among them was Chiara Daughtry, 33, a teacher in Walthamstow, London, who was issued with a no-fault eviction notice in January after complaining about long-term damp problems and refusing a 24% rent rise at the two-bedroom flat she shares with her husband, Ben, and their three-year-old daughter, Maggie.

Despite paying £1,250 a month, the flat was plagued by rotten wooden sash windows letting water in, damp coming from a waterlogged cellar below and water coming in through air bricks.

Council inspectors came to see the problems on several occasions, but nothing was fixed and on Christmas Eve the letting agent said the landlord wanted to increase the rent to £1,550. Daughtry wrote saying "we won't be paying any increase until you address the issues", and the next communication the family received from the landlord was a section 21 notice, she said.

"It was really distressing and really upsetting," she added. "You have no security as a renter here. We are a family. We don't want to move every year or two years. It felt very unfair as a teacher working hard. And there are zero consequences for the letting agent or the landlord."

She said she feared that removing no-fault evictions would not end the problem and that landlords would be able to manipulate other grounds for evictions in the absence of more resources for council officials to carry out checks. She also said continuing short-term tenancies meant landlords could use renewal dates to force people out.

"I am not hopeful things will improve immediately," she said. "They need to put money into the councils for us to see a change."

David Martin, 34, a sales manager, and his partner, Samira, 30, live in Rishi Sunak's constituency of Richmond, North Yorkshire. In January 2021 the couple moved into a £625-a-month two-bedroom privately rented terrace house, but just 24 hours later they were horrified to see damp appearing. That was the start of a two-year battle with mould, which spread throughout the house. Martin complained repeatedly, and in November 2022, when Samira was five months pregnant, the landlord served a section 21 eviction notice.



▲ *David Martin and his partner, Samira, were evicted after making complaints about damp and mould*
PHOTOGRAPH: CHRISTOPHER THOMOND/GUARDIAN

Since then, Martin has written to Sunak and complained to local environmental health officials, who issued an improvement notice on the property.

Now the couple have found a new property – a two-bedroom bungalow in the town.

"The whole process of not having somewhere secure for the baby has been really stressful," he said."Practically, financially and

▼ *Chiara Daughtry and daughter Maggie were evicted after refusing a rent rise on their damp flat to £1,550*
PHOTOGRAPH: SARAH LEE/THE GUARDIAN





emotionally, it's had a massive impact. I think there's quite a lot of things wrong with the rental market.

"It seems that a landlord can get away with not fixing things in the property, not upholding their end of the contract; but as soon as a renter doesn't pay their rent, they're worse than mud. I think something like a register for landlords would make sense, because if we have to have all these background checks on us, why don't the landlords have to have the same thing?"

He said a ban on section 21 evictions will "give renters more security and balance of power".

"At the moment in the rental market landlords cannot fix things, but as soon as you don't have your rent, boom, you're in trouble," he said. "I was having to pay rent for a property that was just not fit for human habitation."

▼ *Protesters march with a model of a barge to Portland, where ministers plan to house asylum seekers*
PHOTOGRAPH: FINNBARR WEBSTER/GETTY



Continued *from page 1*

Alarm as ministers target housing rules to cut asylum bill

also angered some Tory MPs, who say they are putting pressure on local communities and services.

Braverman is already planning to house asylum seekers on redundant cruise ships, barges and ferries in an effort to ease the crisis.

Meanwhile, Rishi Sunak is using a meeting of the Council of Europe in Iceland to lobby his European counterparts to reduce the ability of the European court of human rights to block asylum seeker deportations.

Ministers hope that removing housing regulations for private landlords will also speed up the transfer of people away from hotels.

Felicity Buchan, a junior minister in the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, said in a recent Commons debate that the new rules would enable the "rapid provision of alternative, more cost-effective accommodation".

A government spokesperson said: "By temporarily removing this licensing requirement, we will be able to acquire more suitable long-term accommodation while continuing to meet our legal duty of care."

The abolition of the rules means that landlords of asylum seekers, many of whom use large service companies such as Serco to run their properties, will no longer have to provide gas or electrical safety certificates before tenants move in.

They will not be asked to supply documents on demand to show that electrical appliances and furniture are safe and usable. And they will not have to comply with standards that require under-10s to have a room at least 4.6 sq metres and over-10s a room of at least 6.5 sq metres.

Polly Neate, the chief executive of Shelter, said: "Licensing for HMOs was brought in to keep people safe. By doing away with protections in order to flex minimum space standards, the government is putting thousands of people, including children and older people, at serious risk."

Braverman used a speech to the National Conservatism conference this week to argue for lower migration, despite pressure from some of her cabinet colleagues to allow more to boost the economy.

Gove gave her his backing yesterday, telling the conference that migration was a key reason for the UK's housing crisis - despite evidence that his own watering down of housing targets will drive housebuilding to the lowest level in decades.

Gove said: "Britain's always been a country that has benefited from people of talent arriving here and people fleeing persecution, but the numbers recently have been at a level where there's an inevitable pressure on housing and on public services."

HMO rules explained
Existing regulations – and the changes

What is an HMO?
A house in multiple occupation is any home rented out to three or more tenants from more than one household, whether a house or block of flats. Landlords must register an HMO with the council.

What are the licensing requirements for an HMO?
Landlords must provide:
- **An annual gas safety certificate.**
- **Working smoke alarms for every inhabited storey.**
- **If requested, a declaration that electrical appliances and furniture are safe.**
- **Written statement of the terms of occupancy to tenants.**
- **A carbon monoxide alarm in every inhabited room with a gas or oil heater.**
- **A declaration from a qualified electrician that electrical fittings are safe.**
- **Bedrooms at least: 6.51 sq metres for a room used by one person aged 10 or over; 10.22 sq metres for a room used by two people aged 10 or over; 4.64 sq metres for a room used by one person under 10 .**

What will the new rules mean?
The government will still have some oversight of landlords who rent to asylum seekers because civil servants will sign off on their contracts. But campaigners say the Home Office has already proved it is unable to provide safe and sanitary asylum accommodation after outbreaks of diphtheria at hotels and the Manston holding facility in Kent.

Asylum
Fast track for Iranian and Iraqi claims

Rajeev Syal
Home affairs editor

Up to 20,000 Iraqi and Iranian asylum seekers are to have their claims fast-tracked by the Home Office in a renewed push to clear a backlog, a leaked letter shows.

In a significant move to meet Rishi Sunak's pledge to deal with the asylum backlog, claimants from the two countries will be asked to fill in detailed questionnaires in English before facing shortened interviews with officials. If a claimant fails to comply with the process, their claim could be withdrawn.

The move follows a similar scheme launched in February that asked 12,000 claimants from Afghanistan, Eritrea, Syria, Yemen and Libya to fill in detailed 11-page documents or risk their claims being refused.

Sunak has declared the issue one of his top priorities, and pledged last year to clear the backlog of 92,601 asylum cases submitted before June 2022 by the end of this year.

At the end of 2022 there were 11,698 Iranian and 8,909 Iraqi cases still in the legacy backlog. The grant rate for Iranian claimants is 80%, and for Iraqis it is 54%.

The move has been cautiously welcomed by a leading immigration lawyer. However, campaigners have called for the government to reassure people seeking asylum that their claims will not be withdrawn if they fail to submit documents on time.

In a letter sent to stakeholders on Monday, the Home Office said it was launching "a new phase in the programme to clear the legacy backlog" by grouping the remaining outstanding legacy claims together into cohorts, which will allow claimants to "either be called for a substantive interview or be sent a questionnaire and called for a targeted or shorter interview".

It said those from Iran and Iraq would be prioritised as they made up the highest cohorts of outstanding claims. "Iranian and Iraqi legacy claimants who have not yet been substantively interviewed will begin receiving questionnaires which will be tailored to their circumstances over the next few weeks." It added that shorter interviews would last between 30 minutes and two hours.

Claimants would have 30 working days to return the questionnaire, the letter said. "If they fail to comply … through non-attendance at an asylum interview without a reasonable explanation, their claim may be withdrawn," it added.

Officials said that many of the questionnaires issued in the February scheme have not been filled in properly, meaning these cases still needed lengthy interviews. A report in the Times last week claimed that just 10% had been filled in properly, making the fast-track scheme largely redundant.

Colin Yeo, an immigration barrister and author, welcomed the streamlining of Iraqi and Iranian claims but warned that the new scheme may be premature if the problems of previous questionnaires persist. "Most asylum interviews are about two to three hours anyway so there's not much of a time saving if they're at the upper end of their time estimate."

Afghanistan
Braverman sends families eviction letter

Rajeev Syal

Afghan refugee families uprooted from London to Yorkshire earlier this year have been issued with eviction notices in the name of Suella Braverman.

This will be the fourth time that some families have been forced to move home, sometimes leaving jobs and schools, since being airlifted out of Kabul to the UK in August 2021. They were invited under Operation Pitting because at least one family member worked closely with the British authorities and it was believed their lives would be at risk if they remained in Afghanistan.

The letters were delivered after the UK government announced in March that it would move all 8,000 Afghans out of temporary bridging accommodation or hotels this year and said they must accept the Home Office's first offer of accommodation.

The letters said: "For the avoidance of doubt, if possession is not delivered upon by the notice date, you will be a trespasser and the secretary of state for the home department shall be at liberty to evict you from the property."

Families say they have attempted to find homes but have been thwarted by slow bureaucracy within the Home Office and local councils.

A previous letter sent to the families implied that the Home Office would find them a place to live, the residents said. The letter, sent last Thursday and seen by the Guardian, says: "When you receive a housing offer from us, it is strongly advised that you accept so that you can start your settled life in the UK."

But on Saturday, Home Office officials said the hotel residents might not be offered any alternative accommodation and may have to find their own accommodation instead.

A Home Office spokesperson said: "Hotels are not, and were never designed to be, suitable long-term accommodation for Afghans resettled in the UK. Where available, the government will continue to make offers of suitable housing, which we strongly encourage Afghan families to accept. Where an offer cannot be made or is rejected, increased government support is available to help Afghans find their own homes and begin rebuilding their lives here."



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Countries can slash worldwide plastic pollution by 80% in 20 years, says UN

Damian Carrington
Environment editor

Global plastic pollution could be slashed by 80% by 2040, according to a report from the UN Environment Programme (Unep). The changes needed were major, but also practical and affordable, the agency said.

The first step was to eliminate unnecessary plastics, such as excessive packaging, the report said. Next steps would be to increase the reuse of plastics, such as refillable bottles, boost recycling and replace plastics with greener alternatives.

Such a shift, driven by government policies and changes in the plastic industry, would mean plastic pollution dropping to about 40m tonnes in 2040, rather than 227m tonnes if no action was taken.

The changes would bring benefits worth trillions of dollars between now and 2040, the report said, by reducing the damage caused by plastics to health, the climate and the environment.

Plastic contaminates the entire planet, from the top of Mount Everest to the oceans. People consume microplastics through food and water, as well as the air, and particles have been found in blood and breast milk.

In March last year, 193 countries agreed to end plastic pollution, with negotiations on a legally binding agreement by 2024 now under way, hosted by Unep. The second round of negotiations starts on 29 May. The world currently produces 430m tonnes of plastics a year, two-thirds of which are short-lived products that soon become waste. Production is set to triple by 2060 on current trends.

"The way we produce, use and dispose of plastics is polluting ecosystems, creating risks for human health and destabilising the climate," said Inger Andersen, Unep's executive director. "This report lays out a roadmap to dramatically reduce these risks through adopting a circular approach that keeps plastics out of ecosystems, out of our bodies and in the economy."

The report estimated that the increased reuse of plastics could reduce plastic pollution by 30% by 2040, with measures including deposit-return schemes for containers. Such a scheme is due to start in England in 2025, seven years after it was first announced.

More recycling would cut pollution in 2040 by a further 20%, the report said. Taxing virgin plastic and removing fossil fuel subsidies would make recycling more economically attractive compared with producing new plastic. Enforcing packaging guidelines to increase recyclability would also be important.

The careful replacement of plastic products, such as takeaway food containers, with alternatives such as paper or compostable materials could cut another 17% from pollution in 2040, the report said.

Plastic items from takeaway food and drink dominate the litter in oceans, according to a 2021 study. There would still be plastic waste to be disposed of safely in 2040, and making manufacturers responsible would help, the Unep report said.

The report indicated cost savings from producing less plastic and increased revenues from recycled plastic would reduce plastic industry costs. Investment needed for the overall shift would be substantial, at $65bn (£51m) a year, the report said, but that was about half of what was already invested by the plastic industry.

The report estimated that over 20 years, cutting plastic pollution by 80% would prevent damage valued at more than $3tn, including impacts on health, the environment and legal costs for cases against plastics companies. The cut would prevent 500m tonnes of CO_2 emissions a year, the report estimated, about the same as the emissions of Canada. This shift could also lead to a net increase of 700,000 jobs by 2040.

▼ *Models show the Italian brand's street-style-influenced collection at the Gyeongbokgung Palace in Seoul*
PHOTOGRAPH: HEON-KYUN JEON/AFP/GETTY



Gucci coup
Show seals Seoul's status as fashion powerhouse

Jess Cartner-Morley
Seoul

Baggy jeans, luxury handbags, K-pop heart-throbs and a 14th-century palace starred in a lavish Gucci catwalk show that highlighted Seoul's status as a centre of pop culture and a key battleground for luxury brands.

A famous Seoul backdrop and the strong influence of the city's street style in the collection were the biggest fashion statements of the night. The Gyeongbokgung Palace, command post and fortress of the Joseon dynasty, is symbolic of Korean power and pride. The first fashion show to be held in its ceremonial courtyard reflects how South Korea's rise to soft-power superpower has put this city at the heart of the fashion industry – and how Gucci, which first entered the country 25 years ago with the opening of a boutique in Seoul, is keen to maintain its high profile.

South Koreans spend an average of £260 on luxury goods each year, the highest per capita of any country, according to Morgan Stanley bank. Even more significant for brands is the halo effect of association with Korean culture. The rise of K-fashion follows K-pop and K-drama, as Korea's culture-first approach to world domination continues. Netflix recently announced a $2.5bn (£2bn) investment in Korean language content, with the chief executive, Ted Sarandos, saying South Korea "represents the cultural zeitgeist".



▲ *The show channelled the energy and spending power of South Korea*

Gucci arrives in Seoul hot on the heels of Louis Vuitton, which collaborated with the Squid Game director, Hwang Dong-hyuk, for a show held on the city's Jamsugyo Bridge last month.

The electrifying energy of South Korea was channelled into a collection that tipped its hat to contemporary and traditional South Korean dress. Bomber jackets and cargo pants were accessorised with the ultimate streetwear It-bag: a Gucci skateboard with a logoed laptop pouch between the wheels.

In contrast, the empire-line, pebble-smooth curves silhouette of the traditional Korean hanbok were echoed in a scuba crop-top worn with a high-waisted full maxi skirt.

For seven years until the sudden departure of the designer Alessandro Michele last year, Gucci set the style pace, championing a gender-fluid and vintage-curious aesthetic that moved the fashion needle. An interregnum is in place until the new designer Sabato De Sarno, poached from Valentino, presents his first collection this year. This show was a collective effort by the design studio.

Guest of honour was the brand ambassador Hanni of the girlband NewJeans, who recently set a K-pop record by reaching 1bn Spotify streams 219 days after the release of their first single.

Netflix warns internet providers to brace for its login crackdown

Mark Sweney

Netflix has warned telecoms companies including Sky, Virgin Media and BT to brace for a potential backlash from customers who view its films and TV shows through their networks, as the streaming service prepares to crack down on the widespread practice of password sharing that allows millions of British homes to watch for free.

Netflix, which is getting tougher with password sharing as one of a number of moves to increase profitability amid slowing rates of new-subscriber growth, has estimated that about 100m homes that pay for its service globally share their passwords with friends and family.

The world's biggest streaming service – which has already begun to crack down on password sharing in regions including Latin America, New Zealand, Spain, Portugal and Canada – is expected to target British subscribers in the coming weeks.

About a quarter of the UK's 15 million Netflix subscribers, almost 4m homes, allow others to use their service for free, according to Digital i.

Netflix intends to get paying customers to set a primary location, and when their account is used in other areas, the account holder will be warned. They will be encouraged to sign up for a "paid sharing" model, designed to get the free users added for a few extra pounds a month.

The company has held talks with partners that bundle its service with their own TV and broadband packages – such as Sky, TalkTalk, Virgin Media and BT – to warn them of the impending crackdown, in a move first reported by the Financial Times.

Telecoms companies will probably receive calls, chat and email queries from customers about the potential curbs to usage that they have become accustomed to sharing for free.

"There may initially be a bit of kneejerk reaction from some subscribers," said Digital i's managing director, Matt Ross. "We have seen a drop in viewing per account in Spain where Netflix has already started to crack down on password sharing. The question is what the overall impact will be on subscriber numbers in the long term."

Spain has a higher rate of password sharing than the UK, with 39% of Netflix users sharing their logins.

100m
Estimated number of subscribers worldwide that share their Netflix password with friends and family

Greggs wins right to late night opening for Leicester Square store

Sarah Butler

A row over Greggs' right to sell sausage rolls and pizzas to London commuters in the early hours has been resolved after the food chain agreed to cool its plans to sell "hot" items such as chicken goujons and potato wedges.

Greggs said it could now open its Leicester Square flagship store until 2am from Thursday to Saturday and until midnight through the rest of the week after Westminster council allowed it to sell hot drinks, such as tea and coffee, as well as sausage rolls, pizza slices and steak bakes, after an 11pm curfew.

The store will not be allowed to sell food heated above ambient temperature, including potato wedges and chicken goujons, past 11pm, under a licence expected to be approved later this week.

The company was last summer refused a licence to open its store in Leicester Square between 11pm and 5am amid claims it could become a "hotspot for late-night disturbances and antisocial behaviour".

The row was set to be reheated in a three-day appeal hearing at Westminster magistrates court from Tuesday 16 May - but that hearing has been cancelled.

The councillor Aicha Less, the deputy leader of Westminster city council, said: "Greggs had originally applied for a licence in Leicester Square to sell hot food and hot drinks for 24 hours, Mondays to Sundays. This was refused by Westminster's licensing subcommittee and Greggs appealed that decision.

"Based on the merits of this case, Westminster have come to an agreement with Greggs that works for everyone."

The council said Greggs's licence covered the sale of hot drinks, but not food kept hot, and was based on "significant conditions" including the installation of CCTV at its store, the use of door supervisors and clearing litter.



▲ *The drag queen Pasty Kween at the opening of the Greggs shop in Leicester Square, London, last year*
PHOTOGRAPH: MATT ALEXANDER/PA

> *'We reached a good solution for both parties [for the store to open] over the midnight cusp'*
> **Roisin Currie**
> *CEO, Greggs*

Roisin Currie, the chief executive of Greggs, said the appeal hearing had been cancelled as, after discussions with Westminster, it had "reached a good solution for both parties". She said Greggs would not trade 24 hours a day but would be able to open "over the midnight cusp".

Greggs does not need a licence to sell its trademark sausage rolls and other bakes as they are made elsewhere and not kept hot in-store, and are allowed to cool down once baked. However, it needs permission from the local authority to sell hot food, including bacon baps, sausage breakfast rolls, chicken goujons and potato wedges, which are kept hot once cooked, as well as tea and coffee, between 11pm and 5am.

Greggs's application for late-night trading was blocked by Westminster council after the Metropolitan police said fast-food premises operating after 11pm attracted those who had been drinking in pubs and bars nearby, with "the likely effect of an increase in crime and disorder in the area and an increased demand on police resources which are already stretched".

The Guardian Live



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Mirror blackmailed by reporter as it tried to cover up phone hacking, court hears

Jim Waterson
Media editor

A leading Mirror journalist allegedly blackmailed the company as it attempted to cover up phone hacking, the high court heard yesterday.

Lee Harpin, who held a number of senior roles at the People and Sunday Mirror, was alleged to be a known phone hacker whose understanding of illegal behaviour at the newspaper group caused anxiety at board level.

Harpin, who is now political editor of Jewish News, told the Guardian: "I categorically deny the allegations. No one has contacted me from either side to give evidence so I have not been given a chance to respond to these outrageous allegations."

The claims were made in a witness statement to the phone-hacking trial by Brian Basham, an investor and PR executive. He told the court he extensively researched the Mirror's involvement in phone hacking and shared his findings with the company's executives and media reporters.

Prince Harry and more than 100 other claimants allege there was a widespread culture of phone hacking and other illegal activity by journalists at the Daily Mirror, Sunday Mirror and the People newspapers over several decades.

The court heard Basham went for lunch with David Grigson, the Mirror's then-chairman, in 2012 and advised him to "clear the decks" on phone hacking to avoid being swept up in the same scandal as the News of the World. At that time the Mirror was still publicly insisting its journalists had not been involved in phone hacking.

Basham told the court that senior staff, including board members of the listed company, were aware that voicemail interception had been widely used by its journalists. He claimed the company's lawyers were openly making jokes about checking mobile phone messages to "widespread laughter" in the newsroom.

He also alleged that former the Mirror chief executive Sly Bailey, who was in charge during the period when phone hacking is alleged to have been at its peak, "had orchestrated a cover-up". He said Bailey had "bullshitted her way around a lot, and that investors had been misled".



▲ Brian Basham claimed Mirror lawyers joked about phone hacking

Basham said his research into the Mirror later led him to conclude the board was particularly concerned by Harpin, who he described as "the phone hacking 'dauphin', or heir apparent".

Harpin was arrested on suspicion of phone hacking while working at the Mirror in 2015 but was never charged. The Crown Prosecution Service dropped its phone-hacking investigations into dozens of journalists after concluding there was "insufficient evidence to provide a realistic prospect of a conviction".

Basham alleged that around this time Harpin "was blackmailing the company to prevent them from penalising him for his phone-hacking activities by threatening to blow the whistle on everything he knew about their problem if they did".

The Mirror's barrister suggested Basham was defaming individuals on the basis of anonymous sources.

Mirror Group Newspapers has already paid out more than £100m in settlements and legal fees for phone hacking. It is fighting four test cases, including Prince Harry's, because it disputes their evidence. It also argues the claims have been filed too late.

Harry is due to give evidence at the start of June.

Harry in fresh legal challenge to Home Office over personal security detail

Caroline Davies

A decision not to allow Prince Harry to pay for police protection while he is in the UK is unlawful, his lawyers claimed yesterday, as he launched a second legal challenge against the Home Office over his security arrangements.

At a high court hearing in London, lawyers for Harry argued he should be given the go-ahead to bring a case contesting the decision of the royal and VIP security committee (Ravec) that people should not be allowed to privately pay for their protective security.

Lawyers for the Home Office argued it was not appropriate for "wealthy people" to be able to "buy" armed police protective security. The prince's lawyers argued that the decision was inconsistent with the 1996 Police Act which allows the provision of special police services "subject to payment".

His bid is related to an earlier claim challenging the decision that he would no longer have the same security when visiting the UK after he stepped back as a working royal.

Shaheed Fatima KC, for Harry, said the case raised an "important issue of principle". She said the argument relied on by Ravec, "that allowing



▲ Prince Harry in Westminster Abbey for his father's coronation, where he was without police security
PHOTOGRAPH: RICHARD POHLE/AP

payment for protective security is contrary to the public interest and will undermine public confidence in the Metropolitan police", could not be reconciled with the fact that parliament had expressly allowed for the payment for such services.

Ravec had not provided any principled or rational basis for drawing a distinction between the provision of protective security for those individuals within the Ravec cohort, who, according to the funding decision, "are not permitted to privately fund protective security, and other private individuals, who could privately fund protective security, by making a request to the chief officer of police." She told the court: "Ravec had exceeded its authority, its power, because it doesn't have the power to make this decision in the first place."

The judge, Mr Justice Chamberlain, queried if there was not a difference between someone seeking special policing for a private event, such as a festival or football match, and that of a bodyguard.

Harry's lawyer said it was not a case of a bodyguard, it was "protection at a particular location". Harry claims Ravec's decision was unlawful and unreasonable, and that he was not given a chance to be consulted prior to denying him police security.

Robert Palmer KC, for the Home Office, said Ravec's decision was "simply the setting of a policy principle". There was legal uncertainty over where the provision of protective security fell. He said: "The funding decision arose because … the claimant suggested in connection with his first judicial review that he was, or might be, it being unclear, willing privately to fund the protective security he sought, supplied by the Metropolitan police service."

The case is among five other civil cases the duke is pursuing through the court in London.

The hearing continues.

Ex-headhunter appointed to lead overhaul of internal culture at CBI

Kalyeena Makortoff

The scandal-hit Confederation of British Industry (CBI) appointed a chief people officer yesterday in an attempt to overhaul the lobby group's internal culture after a series of sexual misconduct allegations.

Elizabeth Wallace, a former headhunter for the investment firm BlackRock, will take up the new role as part of the CBI executive committee and will report directly to the board on workplace conduct and culture issues.

The CBI said Wallace's appointment was the latest in a series of "decisive steps to rebuild trust in the CBI's culture and purpose", having also appointed the consultancy Principia Advisory to help overhaul its operations earlier this month.

The lobby group is embarking on a wide-reaching turnaround plan as it tries to regain the trust of its members. More than 50 large businesses suspended or cancelled their membership last month after the Guardian published a series of allegations of sexual misconduct.

Those allegations included a woman's claim that she had been raped by a manager during a 2019 summer boat party, and an allegation that another woman had been raped by two male colleagues when she worked at an overseas office of the CBI.

The lobby group said Wallace would begin by implementing the 35 recommendations put forward by the law firm Fox Williams, which conducted an independent investigation into allegations of misconduct.

While the CBI has paused its formal operations, it is preparing for an extraordinary general meeting on 6 June, where it is expected to try to regain the trust - and substantial fees - of former members.

The CBI director general, Rain Newton-Smith, said Wallace's role "will be integral in reforming our people strategy - defining our shared values as we collectively recover from the challenges of recent weeks."

Rape Crisis offers support on 0808 500 2222 in England and Wales, 0808 801 0302 in Scotland, or 0800 0246 991 in Northern Ireland



▲ Elizabeth Wallace, right, the CBI's new chief people officer, with Rain Newton-Smith, the director general

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National
Housing

Housing crisis and consumerism drive £1bn-a-year self-storage boom

Robert Booth
Social affairs correspondent

Britons have packed away enough possessions to fill Buckingham Palace more than 60 times over as the housing crisis, enduring consumerism and a sentimental reluctance to let go of inanimate objects means self-storage is now on the brink of becoming a £1bn-a-year business.

Self-storage units are proving cheaper than renting or buying a bigger home and are springing up alongside new housing developments across the UK, with at least 280 more stores planned between now and 2026 - a more than 10% increase.

In 2022, UK households and businesses piled enough additional items into storage units to occupy more than 2m sq ft (186,000 sq metres), driving up revenues among operators - including Big Yellow and Safestore - by 6.5% to £990m, according to a study by the property agency Cushman & Wakefield and the Self Storage Association UK.

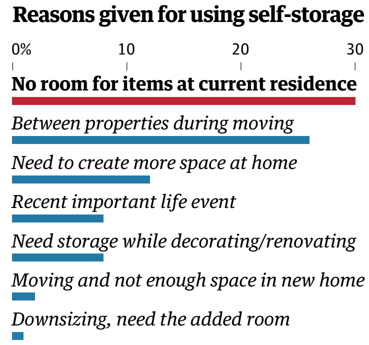
Amid increasing signs that shuttling to and from a self-storage is becoming a routine part of urban life for hundreds of thousands of people, two-thirds of customers now keep their unit for about two years and 16% stay for at least five years.

Self-storage gains from both sides of the online retail boom, hosting online retailers who dispatch products to consumers, who haven't got room for them and so end up taking them to self-storage.

"Marvellous isn't it?" said Kevin Prince, the chief executive of Space Station, who opened his first unit in 1997, now manages 14 storage facilities, and is about to add 13 more. "Long may that continue."

The high cost of housing and shrinking residential floor space are key drivers of rising demand that is attracting global investors, not just in the UK but in other rent hotspots such as New York and California, where people can pay $25,000 (£20,000) a year for a unit.

Reasons given for using self-storage



Source: Cushman & Wakefield

Demand is also driven by people acquiring possessions in the hope that they will soon be able to upsize their home, but being thwarted by the housing market, analysts said.

"Self-storage operators reported a combined £990m of revenue and increased profitability in 2022 as the sector's growth continued unabated despite the pressures on household budgets," the study concludes.

A 90 sq ft unit typically costs £273 a month to rent in London and £131 in the north of England, which is cheaper than residential property.

An industry survey of more than 1,800 UK customers found that the most common reason for using self-storage was a lack of room for the items at home, followed by a house move, major life event such as a death, inheritance or divorce, and renovations. One in five renters are now business customers, often e-commerce retailers.

The range of possible users is huge. Renters and staff told the Guardian of units being used by homeless people as a base while they sofa-surfed or slept on buses; a heroin addict who broke the rules by moving in a mattress to sleep on; a family who wanted their son to learn the drums where it wouldn't disturb them; and by people trying to "live tiny" by having the smallest possible flat and using the storage as an annex for possessions.

Helping to embed storage in the urban fabric, the Space Station chain has installed a hairdresser, florist, vape shop, tattooist and dog beautician at one of its facilities in Shrewsbury. Many other operators are starting to add office space. In London's King's Cross, where thousands of flats have been built in recent years, the finishing touches are being put to a new Big Yellow with a stylish brick facade equal in architectural merit to the nearby apartment blocks.

"An increasing proportion of people, whether by choice or necessity, are staying in rented accommodation for longer," said Philip Macauley, the head of self-storage at Cushman & Wakefield. "On-site self-storage can be a valuable amenity for residents in large developments, especially if they don't have cars."

The industry describes its product as "sticky" because most new customers think they will only use it for a couple of months, but once many people move their stuff in, they struggle with the decision to take it out.

"We get very sentimental about inanimate objects. So that sentiment is good for the sector," said Prince. "Nobody buys stuff to keep for life. Storage is good in that it encourages people to save and reuse things rather than throw them away."



Ivan Arvay with wine crates stored in his unit



Nalia Echchen, who runs a retail business



▼ *Patricia at her self-storage unit: 'It's an important place for me'*

PHOTOGRAPHS: CHRISTIAN SINIBALDI/THE GUARDIAN

Excess loads

Self-storage is increasingly profitable. Big Yellow, which has 108 stores and is the UK's largest operator by floorspace, recorded a 30% increase in adjusted profits before tax last year, reaching £96.8m. Revenues at the next largest operator, Safestore, rose 14% in the same year to £213m.

A storage depot in Camden, London, was sold to Shurgard for £6m last year, and four sites in Banbury, Wednesbury, Frome and Amesbury were acquired by Storage King for £59m. A 500-unit facility can be looked after by just four employees.

The proportion of people saying they had used self-storage more because of the cost of living crisis exceeded the proportion who said they had used it less, a Cushman & Wakefield poll found.

The most likely age of a customer was between 55 and 64 and the most common income bracket was £21,000 to £31,000 a year, with demand falling among people with higher incomes. Half of customers were single, widowed, separated or divorced.

The survey found 65% of domestic customers had rented their unit for about two years, 43% for a year or less, and 16% had used their unit more than five years.

Robert Booth

'This is my home' The people paying for extra space to beat the squeeze in north London

Robert Booth
Social affairs correspondent

Last Sunday morning at the Space Station self-storage depot in Cricklewood, north-west London, Merlin, 49, a care worker, was on her weekly visit to her unit - a space not much larger than a broom cupboard. She was depositing duvets and removing a bag of sun cream and an exercise machine as she managed the transition from winter to summer.

Her unit was neat - house proud even. She had even installed a wine rack and a clothes rail, on which outfits were carefully hung.

"My flat is so small, I need the extra space," she said. She pays £160 a week for a single room in a shared flat, but it is better value to rent this storage for £120 a month than find a bigger home.

Merlin is one of more than 300 people for whom the Cricklewood depot, managed by Gareth Wood, has become an essential adjunct to home.

Wood asks new customers why they are using the storage, but the answer is often simple.

"Do you live in London? That's why you need storage," he said. "You don't have a shed or a spare room. People are just trying to declutter and are making space."

New flats going up mean more business. A Matalan is about to be knocked down and replaced with an apartment block and "as soon as that goes up I imagine there will be a big need", Wood said.

Patricia, a live-in domestic worker, rents a small, £162-a-month unit because her boss does not allow her to have many possessions in the house. "This is my home," she said, indicating the yellow door of her storage unit. "It's an important place for me. I know people who sleep on buses and keep their clothes here. That's happening here in this country."

Behind another steel door Ivan Arvay, 42, originally from Slovakia, has filled his unit with wooden wine crates that he turns into furniture as a hobby. He simply does not have room in his 27 sq metre (290 sq ft) apartment.

"It is [crazy]," he said. "In Slovakia even in a studio flat you have storage in the cellar, but here there is no storage at all."

Businesses account for about one in five customers. Among those at the Cricklewood Space Station is Nalia Echchen, 34. She uses three units for her Amazon-based retail business selling Moroccan textiles, Pokémon figures and other toys. Boxes of toys teeter over a desk and computer she has installed in one corner - in effect turning the unit into an office as well as a warehouse. She has hung a map of the US to remind her of the road trip she one day hopes to enjoy.



▲ *Mariana Repeti helps run an online retailer from a storage unit*

'I know people who sleep on buses and keep clothes here. That's happening in this country'

Patricia
Self-storage customer

"I started selling from home and when I had too much stock, I used storage," she said, as she worked on orders alongside her assistant, Mariana Repeti, 28.

Echchen spends £1,500 a month on the units, but she has developed a business that turns over £400,000 a year. It may not be glamorous, but it is effective.

Self-storage is not just booming in the major cities. Rental returns have been increasing in all regions apart from the south-west and operators are expanding in places such as Slough and Northampton. And the uses are extremely diverse.

In Coventry, Ross Morris, who used to work in a self-storage facility, said there were men fixing motorbikes and car parts in some units and a DJ practising in another, "the deep thud of bass often emanating from his container".

At a certain point a team of builders rented a unit, filled it with rubble, stopped paying the rent and were never seen again.

"A heroin addict was once living in one," Morris said. "We cleared his container of needles, a single mattress, a camping stove and a giant bag of pasta. Not sure how long he had been living in there.

"Containers have been raided by the police on multiple occasions. Drug dealers operating out of them and people storing illegal cigarettes. There is almost no limit to what people use them for - from every walk of society."

Kevin Prince, the CEO of Space Station, recalled a run-in with one customer. "I had a really difficult customer who was quite rude and arrogant, never paid on time and always gave me a hard time," he said. "And then he just stopped responding at all."

After a couple of months not receiving rent, Prince cut the customer's lock off and found the unit empty. The customer had removed all his possessions, but "in the middle of the room was a four foot inflatable penis".

"I think I knew what he was saying to me," said Prince.

Tee, a software engineer who lives in an adapted Land Rover, partly due to expensive rent, said "storage is a powerful tool in allowing people to live tiny".

He uses it to "change the contents of the Land Rover depending on what I'm doing".

If he is going hiking he will deposit his bike and hot-water shower and pick up his hiking gear.

"I have about four or five different configurations of my mobile home I can choose from because I have storage and can swap items in and out," he said.

Jo, 54, an education manager in Brighton who couldn't afford £1,200-a-month rent during the pandemic, had hired an £80-a-month Big Yellow unit for her belongings, sofa-surfed and used Airbnbs for two years.

Having returned to renting, she said she missed "going back to the Big Yellow, looking at all my stuff in one place".

"Now it's all distributed again, it doesn't have the punch."

SUDAN EMERGENCY

YOU CAN HELP MEN, WOMEN AND CHILDREN FLEEING THE VIOLENCE

Following the outbreak of violence in Sudan, tens of thousands of people have fled fierce fighting in Khartoum, the Darfur region and other parts of the country.

This crisis is fast-changing and unpredictable, but **UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, has the reach, partners and local knowledge to get aid through to refugees and people forced to flee**. UNHCR's work in Sudan and surrounding countries, however, was already critically underfunded before the present conflict broke out. We need your support to help replenish emergency supplies and get them to people who need them.

An urgent gift of £82 could help provide people fleeing the conflict with protection and essentials like shelter and clean water.

At least 20,000 Sudanese refugees have arrived in neighbouring Chad, the vast majority of whom are women and children. Many more are expected to arrive over the next few days. People are sleeping out in the open or under trees and urgently need protection and lifesaving essentials, medical care, food and water. UNHCR has deployed emergency teams along the border to provide emergency support and is currently working to identify locations to safely host additional arrivals.

Over 10,000 refugees from South Sudan have had to return hastily to their own country to escape the violence. Many more are heading to the border on foot. UNHCR teams on the ground are working with local and national authorities to set up reception centres in preparation for their arrival.



© UNHCR/Colin Delfosse

Many more are moving to other neighbouring countries. UNHCR is working closely with partners to support those who have arrived and prepare in the event of more people fleeing.

UN High Commissioner for Refugees, Filippo Grandi has said: *"UNHCR, together with the rest of the UN, remains in Sudan in support of its people. It continues to operate wherever it has safe access and is also using some of the community networks established during the pandemic. UNHCR intends to scale up operations everywhere in Sudan as soon as possible."*

The situation is volatile and extremely worrying, but with a gift of £82 today, or whatever you can afford, you could help to save lives.

£82 **could help provide shelter, clean water and protection to people fleeing the violence in Sudan.**

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P23SUAGU2

Gang jailed for faking passports and selling them to criminals

Geneva Abdul

The ringleaders of a gang that specialised in supplying fake passports to high-level criminals, allowing them to evade arrest and identification, were jailed yesterday.

Anthony Beard, 61, paid individuals for expired passports and applied for renewals using photographs of criminals who paid up to £20,000 to start new lives in Dubai, Portugal and Spain.

He was sentenced at Reading crown court to six years and eight months after admitting conspiracy to pervert the course of justice and conspiracy to make a false instrument with intent.

"This was the golden ticket for the organised crime networks in order that they could evade arrest, evade identification by local law enforcement, either internationally or at home in the UK," said Craig Turner, the deputy director of investigations at the National Crime Agency (NCA).

The scheme provided falsified passports to individuals including Jamie Acourt, a former suspect in the original Stephen Lawrence murder inquiry, and Ireland's leading crime boss, Christy Kinahan, among others. The agency said "many fugitives" all over the world had been caught after establishing the use of false identities.



▲ *Anthony Beard caught on camera by the NCA in Bromley, London*

100

Number of fraudulent passport applications Anthony Beard is believed to have ushered through

Beard, from Sydenham, London, approached "vulnerable people" with similar facial features to their clients, according to the NCA. He is believed to have ushered more than 100 fraudulent passport applications through to completion, with several unsuccessful applications made.

Beard countersigned passport applications and used contacts pretending to be professionals to verify image authenticity. His fingerprints were found on many of the forms, according to the NCA.

Another 74 offences linked to applications were taken into consideration.

Christopher Zietek, formerly known as Christopher McCormack, 67, was also jailed for eight years for conspiracy to pervert the course of justice, conspiracy to make a false instrument with intent and converting criminal property.

Alan Thompson, 72, was sentenced to three years for the same offences. Craig Rush, representing the three men, said Thompson had been forced to retire on medical grounds and years later was so bored that he was driven to crime.

Both Thompson and Zietek had been found guilty on 17 March.

Judge Nicholas Ainley said the passport scheme enabled "very wicked, sophisticated, violent criminals" to escape justice. He said that Zietek was "clearly the organiser", providing a link to serious criminals, while Beard was "the leg man" and Thompson had a lesser role.

Beard and Zietek were caught following a covert surveillance operation started by the NCA in 2017. The investigation, codenamed Operation Strey, included handwriting experts and voice recognition specialists, and was described by the agency as one of the "most significant" in recent times.

The two men were arrested during coordinated raids in October 2021.

"We worked across international borders to bring the masterminds to account, and we will continue to protect the UK from criminals who present a threat to our security, people and economy," said Turner.

On the bench
A skateboarder in London on one of Jeppe Hein's 'Modified Social Benches' by the South Bank. He has described the works as 'somewhere between a dysfunctional object and a functional piece of furniture'

PHOTOGRAPH: RICK FINDLER/STORY PICTURE AGENCY



Hotter pollen-laden bees finding raises global heating concern

PA Media

Carrying pollen is a workout that significantly increases the body temperature of bumblebees, researchers have found, raising questions about how they will be affected by the climate crisis.

The insects carry solid packets of pollen on their back legs, which can weigh up to a third of their body weight. According to the research, after accounting for environmental temperature and body size, the body temperature of bumblebees carrying pollen was significantly hotter than the temperature of those that were empty-legged.



Bumblebees carry pollen on their back legs

Specifically, the North Carolina State University study found their body temperatures rose 0.07C for every milligram of pollen they carried, while fully laden bees were 2C warmer than unladen bees.

Malia Naumchik, lead author of the study, said: "Getting warmer from carrying pollen could put bumblebees in the range of those stressful, critically hot temperatures. As environmental temperatures increase, the bees' operational range of temperatures could shrink significantly."

Elsa Youngsteadt, a professor in applied ecology and supervisor of the research, said: "We need to know how bumblebees may change their behaviour, to better understand how this could affect how much pollen they collect and how much pollination they perform during hot days.

"It could result in less pollen coming to the colony and fewer plants being pollinated. This is particularly important since bumblebees provide critical ecosystem services and are key pollinators for agriculture."

In brief



Music

Rapper Slowthai in court on rape charges

Slowthai, the Grammy-nominated rapper, has appeared in court on two charges of rape. The 28-year-old appeared before Oxfordshire magistrates court yesterday via video link charged with oral and vaginal penetration of a woman without her consent in Oxford in September 2021. He spoke only to confirm his real name of Tyron Frampton, date of birth, and address. He was bailed to appear at Oxford crown court next month.

Slowthai was nominated for best dance recording at the Grammys in 2021. His second album, Tyron, reached No 1 in the UK charts that year. Matthew Weaver

Transport

Bus fare cap extended until end of October

Bus passengers in England will be able to keep travelling for £2 after the government extended funding by another £500m.

The fare cap on most local buses, brought in as a temporary measure last year to boost patronage, will be extended until the end of October and then for another 13 months at £2.50 for a single journey, in a move that the Department for Transport said would support people with the cost of living and ensure stability in the sector.

Bus operators welcomed the news but said it would not be enough to save every service. Gwyn Topham

Crime

Suspected knife attack victims are named

A man and a woman killed in a suspected knife attack in Huddersfield have been named. West Yorkshire police said the two victims were Katie Higton, 27, and Steven Harnett, 25. Higton had four children and Harnett was reportedly her new boyfriend.

A 34-year-old man has been arrested on suspicion of double murder and was in police custody last night. Police were called to a house in the Dalton area of Huddersfield at 9.53am on Monday after paramedics found Higton and Harnett, who had suffered multiple injuries and had died at the scene. Postmortems were yet to be conducted. Mark Brown

Eyewitness



▼ **Idlib, Syria**
The photojournalist Mouneb Taim's image of families breaking fast together amid their ruined city in the Muslim holy month of Ramadan, taken after a major offensive by Syrian forces in 2020, has won the politics of food category in the Pink Lady food photographer of the year competition PHOTOGRAPH: MOUNEB TAIM





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Archaeology
Pompeii dig uncovers skeletal remains
Page 29

'Crude manipulation'
Poland split over legacy of John Paul II
Page 30



World



▲ *Black smoke rises from one of Omdurman's major markets, which has been burning for two days*
PHOTOGRAPH: REUTERS



Bombs shake Khartoum as war between Sudan's army and paramilitary intensifies

Zeinab Mohammed Salih
Khartoum
Jason Burke

Airstrikes and artillery fire shook much of Sudan's capital, Khartoum, and its neighbouring cities yesterday as fighting between the country's warring factions intensified sharply.

Battles between the army and the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) flared from dawn in north and south Khartoum, as well as in the adjacent cities of Omdurman and Bahri, as the army sought to defend its bases from its paramilitary rival.

The army has been trying to cut off RSF supply lines from outside the capital, as well as to secure strategic sites including the airport in central Khartoum and the major Al-Jaili oil refinery in Bahri, observers said.

The RSF claimed to have captured 700 soldiers in an attack on an army base in Bahri's al-Jaili district, as well as a major ammunition dump. The RSF's chief media officer shared a clip on WhatsApp showing hundreds of captive army soldiers walking in single file, some barefoot and none with weapons. There was no immediate response from the army, and the clips have not been verified. Both sides have frequently made exaggerated or otherwise misleading claims during more than four weeks of fighting.

Ongoing talks in Saudi Arabia between representatives of the warring factions have failed to stem the violence, which has killed between 600 and 1,000 people so far, according to government officials and medics. The toll is expected to be far higher, with many reports of corpses left in the streets and people struggling to bury the dead.

> *'We don't know what the citizens did to deserve a war in the middle of the houses'*
>
> **Ayman Hassan**
> *Khartoum resident*



▶ *Sudanese people arrive at Qastal land port in southern Egypt yesterday after fleeing the fighting in and around Khartoum*
PHOTOGRAPH: KHALED ELFIQI/EPA

The fighting between forces loyal to Sudan's military ruler, Abdel Fattah al-Burhan, and his former deputy Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo, who leads the RSF, started on 15 April. Both believe they can win a military victory that will bring them absolute authority over Sudan's 46 million inhabitants, crumbling state and valuable natural resources.

Eyewitnesses in Omdurman, which lies on the west bank of the River Nile, saw RSF forces withdrawing over the past 48 hours, apparently to launch new offensives in Khartoum to the south-east.

A resident of Bahri's al-Khojalab district said he had seen RSF forces in dozens of pick-up trucks. "There are very loud sounds of artillery and all sorts of weapons … we don't know what's going on," he said. The neighbourhood is on the opposite bank of the Nile to the Wadi Seidna airfield, from where the army has been launching airstrikes against the RSF.

Heavy fighting has also been taking place in Khartoum's Jabra neighbourhood, where Daglo and many of his senior commanders are based. At least two civilians were killed in a hospital on the eastern banks of the Blue Nile in Khartoum by an airstrike carried out by the army, according to Dr Houida el-Hassan, a former doctor at the hospital.

The army said it had attacked a supply store for the RSF and claimed the hospital was used by the RSF as a supply dump. Ten days ago, six civilians were killed in a similar airstrike in front of the hospital.

The RSF has been accused of occupying hospitals and expelling patients and medical staff. About 80% of hospitals in Khartoum are out of service and most pharmacies are shut. The pharmacies union accused the RSF of blocking delivery of medicine to areas outside of Khartoum.

The RSF are also accused of seizing people's houses to use as temporary strongholds from which they target the military. Widespread reports of sexual assaults by fighters have emerged in recent days.

"The situation is unbearable. We left our house to go to a neighbour's house in Khartoum, escaping from the war, but the bombardment follows us wherever we go," Ayman Hassan, 32, told Reuters.

"We don't know what the citizens did to deserve a war in the middle of the houses."

Much of Khartoum has been ruined in the fighting with food and fuel increasingly scarce and expensive. Charred aircraft lie on the tarmac of the once-busy international airport, foreign embassies are shuttered and hospitals, banks, shops and wheat silos have been ransacked. One major market in Omdurman has been burning for two days after it was emptied and set alight by thieves.

What remains of the government has retreated to Port Sudan about 500 miles (850km) away, the hub for mass evacuations of foreign nationals and many Sudanese citizens.

The UN says nearly 200,000 people have fled Sudan and another 700,000 have been internally displaced by the battles. The fighting has triggered unrest in other areas of Sudan, especially in the western region of Darfur and the southern regions of Kordofan.

The talks in Jeddah brokered by Saudi Arabia and the US have produced a statement about access for aid and protecting civilians, but a ceasefire is still being discussed.

Additional reporting **Reuters**

Journalists around world urge China to release Hong Kong media mogul

Amy Hawkins
Senior China correspondent

More than 100 journalists and editors have signed an open letter calling for the immediate release of Jimmy Lai, a British media mogul detained in Hong Kong on national security charges.

Leading global media figures including the Guardian editor-in-chief, Katharine Viner, and Nobel peace prize winner Maria Ressa, called for the charges against Lai and other journalists in Hong Kong to be dropped.

Lai, who is 75 and was first arrested in 2020, is the founder and publisher of Apple Daily, a liberal newspaper that was forced to close in 2021 after the Chinese Communist party cracked down on pro-democracy protests.

A longtime critic of the party, Lai is now one of the most high-profile activists in Hong Kong to have been arrested since the Chinese government imposed a sweeping national security law on the territory in 2020.

Lai was charged with violating the national security law in August 2020. His trial for that case is scheduled for September, but since his arrest he has been convicted on separate charges of fraud and organising illegal protests - charges his supporters say are politically motivated.

The signatories to the letter, which was organised by press freedom group Reporters Without Borders (RSF), said: "We, as publishers and editors of news media organisations from around the world, are united in support of Apple Daily founder and publisher Jimmy Lai, and his fight for media pluralism and press freedom in Hong Kong.



▲ *Jimmy Lai was arrested in 2020*

> ***'Lai has always stood for media pluralism and press freedom'***
>
> **Open letter**
> *Reporters Without Borders*

"Jimmy Lai has stood for these values his entire life … In a tremendous act of courage, he chose to stay in Hong Kong and continued to publish as long as he could, despite the severe crackdown taking place around him."

Hong Kong is ranked 140th out of 180 countries in RSF's 2023 World Press Freedom Index, down from 58th place 10 years ago.

In March, Caoilfhionn Gallagher KC, Lai's international lawyer, said the tactics used by Hong Kong's authorities amounted to "lawfare" - the use of legal mechanisms to suppress opposition - citing the fraud conviction as a tool to smear Lai's character.

On 11 May, Hong Kong passed a law allowing authorities to ban foreign lawyers from working on national security cases, as a means of preventing Lai from engaging Tim Owen, a UK barrister, in his coming trial.

Lai's family and supporters have also criticised the UK government for not doing enough to advocate for the publisher's release. Last week Sebastian Lai, his elder son, said the UK government was "incredibly weak" for failing to call for the release of his father.

A spokesperson for the UK Foreign Office said it had "regularly" brought its concerns to Chinese and Hong Kong authorities, including the foreign secretary raising Lai's case at the UN Human Rights Council in February.

"We have made clear our strong objection to China's imposition of the national security law in Hong Kong, which is being used in a deliberate attempt to target and silence pro-democracy figures, including Jimmy Lai," the spokesperson said.

Censorship
Libraries targeted in run-up to Tiananmen anniversary

Helen Davidson
Taipei

Books about Tiananmen Square, Hong Kong protest movements and other subjects deemed politically sensitive by China have been removed from public libraries in the former British colony as the 34th anniversary of the massacre in the centre of Beijing approaches.

Hong Kong media have reported a marked increase in the number of book and documentary removals, which have been growing since the authoritarian clampdown on Hong Kong's pro-democracy movement and the introduction of the national security law in 2020.

It has resulted in a significant curtailing of political freedoms in the city and multiple arrests.

Last month, the government's audit commission report said the leisure and cultural services department, which runs Hong Kong's libraries, needed to "step up efforts in examining library materials for safeguarding national security and taking follow-up actions".

The report said Hong Kong's public libraries had completed a preliminary review of books that focused on authors and publishers "suspected of publishing books on 'Hong Kong independence' previously".

It said the review of titles, which began in 2021, was ongoing and



▲ *A man blocks tanks in the defining image of the Tiananmen massacre of student protesters in 1989 in Beijing*
PHOTOGRAPH: JEFF WIDENER/AP



▼ *Customers in a Hong Kong bookshop in 2009 browse titles on Tiananmen; few are now available*
PHOTOGRAPH: KIN CHEUNG/AP

unlikely to have a clear end date. Yesterday, Hong Kong media outlets reported that hundreds of books about the Tiananmen Square massacre of student protesters on 4 June 1989 appeared to have been removed from libraries as part of the review. Photon Media searched for 149 titles that were available in 2009 and found only four still listed.

Ming Pao newspaper reported that about 40% of politically themed books, magazines and videos available at the end of 2020 were gone. It said a number of documentaries, including by the public broadcaster RTHK, were also absent.

A Guardian search of the Hong Kong public libraries' online catalogue returned some titles related to the Tiananmen Square massacre but most were shown to have "no lending copy available on shelf".

Four books on the "umbrella movement" protests in Hong Kong were shown to have copies available. "Books with content suspected of breaching the national security law or other local laws are removed immediately for a review," a spokesperson for the leisure and cultural services department told the South China Morning Post.

Government figures have defended the move as safeguarding national security. The Hong Kong chief executive, John Lee, said that books were still available for purchase at private bookshops - a claim disputed by activists and residents, who noted that several bookshops have closed or no longer stock sensitive books for fear of contravening the national security law.

School libraries had already removed books deemed to be politically sensitive in the months after the introduction of the law.

"What libraries need to do is ensure that books that may not be suitable for circulation, that they have to do their duties," Hong Kong's secretary for security, Chris Tang, said yesterday.

"The principles we use, which I support, is first of all to ensure there is no breach of any laws in Hong Kong, including of course copyright etc, and also if they spread any kind of messages that are not in the interest of Hong Kong."

Tang said he was sure that "safeguarding national security is high on the agenda of each and every individual department and bureau".

Increasing censorship under the remit of the national security law has also targeted media outlets, cartoons, films, documentaries and art exhibitions.

In response, a growing number of international projects are archiving or publishing the targeted content.

Several are operating under the radar, according to one operator of a project receiving sensitive books donated by people in Hong Kong for foreign redistribution. He said people passed books along from friend to friend, driven by a need to preserve books and information about Hong Kong's society and history.

FBI accused of failures but report finds no plot against Trump

Hugo Lowell
Washington

The special counsel John Durham found no evidence that the US justice department and the FBI conspired in a deep-state plot to investigate Donald Trump's ties to Russia in 2016, though the report released on Monday found that the FBI's handling of key aspects of the case was deficient.

The Durham report was sharply critical of how the FBI decided to open the counterintelligence investigation into Trump, known as Crossfire Hurricane, accusing top officials at the bureau of relying on raw and uncorroborated information.

Much of the criticism of the FBI in the roughly 300-page report was already known when the justice department inspector general issued its own report, which raised similar concerns but ultimately concluded that the FBI investigation into Trump was justified.

The Durham report was more scathing, finding that the FBI moved quickly on a vague tip about potential contacts between a Trump campaign aide and Russian officials in July 2016 based on "raw, unanalyzed and uncorroborated evidence" in a "departure from how it approached" the Clinton campaign.

But Durham's inquiry failed to uncover any blockbuster revelations, suggesting the bureau targeted Trump out of political motivations.

Durham also said the FBI was more cautious of allegations of foreign influence when it came to the Clinton campaign, and did not pursue evidence in two cases of foreign governments trying to gain influence with Clinton while providing defensive briefings, unlike with the Trump campaign. In addition, the report said the FBI was overly reliant on investigative tips from Trump's political opponents and did not rigorously analyse the information it received, which extended the investigation and led to the appointment of special counsel Robert Mueller .



▲ Trump predicted Durham would uncover 'the crime of the century'

The delivery of the report to the attorney general, Merrick Garland, and to the top Democrats and Republicans on the House and Senate judiciary committees, several hours before it was made public, largely marks the end of the nearly four-year investigation led by Durham.

Durham's appointment as special counsel by the former attorney general William Barr was essentially tasked with investigating a different special counsel – Mueller. The investigation was beset by controversy, including when Barr pressed Durham to draft an interim report just before the 2020 election, a directive that gave rise to allegations of improper political interference.

In September 2020, according to the New York Times, one of the prosecutors on Durham's team and the former acting US attorney Nora Dannehy discovered that other members of the team had written a draft report that she had not been told about. Dannehy was reportedly furious and told Durham that no report should be issued before the investigation had been completed and especially not relying on disputed information that could affect the election. Dannehy sent her colleagues a memo about her concerns and resigned.

While Trump once predicted that Durham would uncover the "crime of the century", the investigation proved to be defective in court. Two people he charged were acquitted, and only the former FBI lawyer who altered an email to help prepare a wiretap application pleaded guilty.

The report ended without recommending any wholesale changes at the FBI, but suggested the creation of a position at the bureau to provide oversight of politically sensitive investigations with the power to challenge each stage, including wiretaps.

Durham's investigation was recorded as costing about $6.5m (£5.1m) as of last December. Two cases that Durham took to court ended in failure. Last year, a jury found the cybersecurity lawyer Michael Sussman not guilty of lying to the FBI. A jury also found the researcher Igor Danchenko not guilty of making false statements to the FBI in a case argued personally by Durham.

Durham extracted a guilty plea from the lawyer Kevin Clinesmith, who admitted in a 2020 plea agreement he had altered a government email that a colleague then used to justify the wiretap of the former Trump campaign aide Carter Page.

▼ *A necklace of 177 Saxon pearls, left, and a diamond-encrusted brooch are among the treasures recovered from the Green Vault raid*





PHOTOGRAPHS: JÜRGEN KARPINSKI/EPA

Family of raiders guilty of €113m jewels heist at German museum

Philip Oltermann
Berlin

A German court convicted five men yesterday for the theft of 18th-century jewels worth more than €113m from a Dresden museum in 2019, one of the most spectacular heists in the country's modern history.

The men were jailed for between four years and four months and six years and three months. Another was acquitted. A court ruled that the five men – aged 24 to 29 and all related – were responsible for the break-in at the Green Vault museum on 25 November 2019 and the theft of 21 pieces of jewellery containing more than 4,300 diamonds and other items worth at least €113m (£98m).

After a 47-day trial with evidence from more than 100 witnesses, the five were convicted of particularly aggravated arson in combination with dangerous bodily injury, theft with weapons, damage to property and arson. The men started a fire before the break-in to cut the power supply to street lights and set a car ablaze in a nearby garage before fleeing. They were caught months later in raids in Berlin. In January, a plea bargain was agreed after most of the haul – 31 individual pieces – was returned.



▲ *The Green Vault at the Royal Palace state museum in Dresden*

The plea bargain had been agreed by four defendants. The fifth also confessed but only to the procurement of objects such as the axes used to make holes in the museum display case.

The prosecutor had defended the plea bargain as being key to the majority of the stolen objects being returned, although politicians and parts of the media complained yesterday it had resulted in leniency.

Some of the most valuable jewels remain missing, including the "Saxon White", a 49-carat diamond believed to be worth up to $12m, and a diamond necklace and a large bow-shaped stomacher worn by Queen Amalie August of Bavaria.

Abdul-Majed Remmo, 24, one of two twins on trial, apologised, describing the crime as "a gigantic mistake" and promising to start a new life. Three the Remmo family, two of whom stood trial in Dresden, were sentenced three years earlier over the 2017 theft of a 100kg gold coin that remains missing.

Additional reporting
Associated Press

Japanese people turn to smile tutors after mask advice ends

Justin McCurry
Osaka

After three years of concealing their mouths behind masks, some Japanese people are turning to specialist smile tutors to relearn the art of breaking into a beaming grin without looking awkward.

Since the official advice to wear masks to help prevent the spread of Covid-19 was lifted, many people have admitted to struggling to adjust, with some confessing they have forgotten how to smile.

"With mask wearing having become the norm, people have had fewer opportunities to smile, and people have developed a complex about it," Keiko Kawano, a coach with the "smile education" company Egaoiku, told the Asahi Shimbun.

"Moving and relaxing the facial muscles is the key to making a good smile. I want people to spend time consciously smiling for their physical and mental wellbeing."

Participants used handheld mirrors to check their progress, adjusting their expressions until they were satisfied they had rediscovered their natural, pre-mask grin.

4,000
Number of people that Keiko Kawano has coached in the art of smiling over the past six years

Egaoiku saw the number of applicants rise by 4.5 times after media first reported the impending Covid-19 reclassification in February.

One of the participants, Akiko Takizawa, 79, said she was excited about going back to her pre-mask life, with a little help from her smile coach. "I didn't have opportunities to see people during the coronavirus crisis and didn't smile in public," she told the Mainichi Shimbun newspaper. "This has reminded me how important smiling is."

The classes are particularly popular among women and begin with stretches to relieve facial tension.

"A smile is only a smile if it's conveyed," she told students, according to the Japan Times. "Even if you're happy, if you have no expression, it won't reach your audience."

Kawano has coached more than 4,000 people in the art of smiling over the past six years, and trained hundreds of certified "smile specialists".



Herd alert Cows graze outside the Reichstag in Berlin as part of a protest against stall-fed cattle farming staged by Greenpeace and the German environmental group AbL, which wants to see more animal-friendly dairy farms.

PHOTOGRAPH: CLEMENS BILAN/EPA

Imran Khan granted bail in more cases alleging corruption

Shah Meer Baloch *Islamabad*
Hannah Ellis-Petersen *Delhi*

Pakistan's former prime minister Imran Khan has been granted bail in several more cases as he continues to allege that the country's powerful military plans to rearrest him imminently.

Khan, who is facing more than 100 cases, was granted bail by courts in Islamabad and Lahore in several legal actions relating to corruption and terrorism charges.

Lawyers for the ex-prime minister also appeared before the Lahore high court, alleging that several "secret cases" had been filed against Khan they had not been informed about, and sought bail for all cases filed in the past two weeks. The court has reserved its judgment until later in the week. Khan did not appear before the court in Lahore, leading to questions from the judge about his whereabouts.

The previous day Khan's wife, Bushra Bibi, had been granted bail in a corruption case, after Khan alleged in a series of tweets that the military planned to arrest her as part of plan to humiliate him.

Since Khan was released from jail last Friday, after his arrest earlier in the week had been declared illegal by the supreme court, the political turmoil in Pakistan has shown no sign of relenting.

In recent days Khan has escalated his attacks on Pakistan's powerful military establishment, in particular its most senior generals.

In an interview with the Guardian, Khan openly accused the head of the military of having a "personal grudge" against him and being behind his arrest. In a series of tweets this week he alleged that the military planned to lock him away "for 10 years" by charging him with sedition. "This is a deliberate attempt to instil so much fear in people that when they come to arrest me tomorrow, people won't come out," he tweeted.

In a video message on Twitter yesterday, Khan, a populist with massive public support, reiterated his call for his followers to hold peaceful street protests when he gave the command. "When the nation decides that it won't tolerate this oppression, when it decides that it won't allow the violation of the constitution and that it wants elections - then no one will be able to stop them," he said.

Meanwhile, hundreds of supporters of the government staged a protest on Monday outside the supreme court, accusing the chief justice who declared Khan's arrest illegal of being "biased" and giving him "undue favours".

The crackdown on members of Khan's party, Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) continued yesterday, with two senior leaders rearrested just hours after the court granted them bail. Outside Islamabad high court, Fawad Chaudhry, a senior PTI figure, sprinted back into the courtroom for protection after he found dozens of police waiting to arrest him after he was granted bail. Another leading figure in the party was remanded by an anti-terrorism court in relation to the violent protests that took place after Khan was arrested.

The prime minister , Shehbaz Sharif, addressed the National Security Committee yesterday, stating: "I believe that whoever planned this and incited the vandalism, they are certainly guilty of terrorism."

Group attacks Brigitte Macron's nephew at family chocolate shop

Agence France-Presse
Lille

The French president's wife, Brigitte Macron, has denounced what appears to have been a politically motivated attack on her great-nephew, who was beaten up outside her family's shop.

Jean-Baptiste Trogneux was returning on Monday evening to his apartment above the famed Jean Trogneux chocolate shop that he runs in Amiens, northern France, when he was set upon by a group of anti-government protesters.

The 30-year-old was hit on the head, arms and legs by his aggressors, who insulted "the president, his wife and our family" before running away, the victim's father, Jean-Alexandre Trogneux, said yesterday.

"They've crossed the line. I'm flabbergasted," Trogneux said, adding that his son was being checked by a doctor and was awaiting the results of a scan.

Brigitte Macron issued a rare statement condemning the "cowardice, stupidity and violence" of the attack.

"I am in complete solidarity with my family and have been in touch constantly since 11pm yesterday," she said. "I have on several occasions denounced this kind of violence that can only lead to the worst."

Police said they had arrested eight people after the attack.

The family of France's first lady have run the shop, which specialises in macarons, in her home city for six generations. The business has been repeatedly targeted by protesters during Emmanuel Macron's six years as president amid rumours - repeatedly denied - that the first family have a financial interest in the company.



▲ *Emmanuel and Brigitte Macron, who spoke out against the attack*

Macron's reforms to the pension system, which include raising the retirement age from 62 to 64 later this year, have triggered the biggest demonstrations in a generation.

Repeated clashes during protests, as well as attacks on the offices of local and national elected figures, have fuelled debate about whether the country is growing more prone to violence. During protests in April, a fire was started at one of Macron's favourite restaurants in Paris, the upmarket La Rotonde , before it was quickly put out by firefighters.

France pledges reparations to further groups of interned Algerians

Kim Willsher
Paris

The French government is to pay reparations to thousands more Algerians and their families held in internment camps in France after the north African country's war of independence.

Acting on a report by an independent commission, the government agreed to increase the number of *harkis* and their relatives eligible to claim compensation for being forced to live in squalid conditions several decades ago.

Up to 200,000 Algerians were recruited to fight alongside French colonial forces in the war for independence between 1954 and 1962. The word *harki* comes from the Arabic for "movement" and referred to the mobile units in which many of the Algerians served.

Paris had promised to look after them at the end of the conflict but then left them to fend for themselves after independence was signed in March 1962. Many of those trapped in Algeria and branded traitors were massacred in revenge for supporting the former colonialists.

An estimated 42,000 *harkis* and about the same number of relatives who fled to France were held in camps that led to the deaths of dozens of children between 1962 and 1975. France initially refused to recognise their right to stay.

France held its first national day in honour of *harkis* in 2001 but it was not until 2016 that the then president, François Hollande, formally recognised the state's role in abandoning them. In 2021, Emmanuel Macron asked for "forgiveness" on behalf of France for leaving the *harkis* and their families to their fate after independence.

In February last year, the French government recognised the country's responsibility for "the indignity of the hosting and living conditions on its territory" and the "exclusion, suffering and lasting trauma" that ensued. It gave reparations to those who had lived in 89 internment camps of up to €3,000 (£2,600) for those held for a year and an extra €1,000 for every subsequent year.

At the time, about 50,000 *harkis* were expected to be eligible for reparations at a total cost of €310m.

However, a report by an independent commission identified 45 new sites, including "military camps, slums, transit shacks", where up to 14,000 *harkis* and their families were forced to live.

Patricia Mirallès, the minister for veterans, said the decision would go some way to "make amends for a new injustice, including in regions where until now the suffering of the *harkis* living there were not recognised".

Turkey economic crisis likely to deepen after Erdoğan tops poll

Ruth Michaelson
Istanbul

Turkey's economic crisis is expected to worsen after Recep Tayyip Erdoğan came top in the first round of the country's presidential election and his party gained a parliamentary majority in a legislative vote, analysts said.

The Turkish lira dropped close to a historic low when markets opened the morning after Sunday's vote.

President Erdoğan subverted expectations by coming out on top, gaining 49.5% of the vote in the presidential race compared with 44.9% for his challenger, Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu. As neither candidate reached the 50% threshold needed to win outright, a runoff vote will take place on 28 May.

Erdoğan's governing alliance, made up of his Justice and Development party and a group of nationalist parties, meanwhile secured a parliamentary majority.

A cost of living crisis did not drive away support for Erdoğan, even though his unorthodox economic policies, including an aversion to raising interest rates, have contributed to the increasing cost of food and other basics.

"Hopes of an opposition victory and a return to orthodox policymaking have evaporated," wrote Liam Peach, of Capital Economics in London. "Instead, there is now a very real risk that an Erdoğan victory could lead to macroeconomic instability in Turkey, including the threat of a severe currency crisis and strains in the banking and sovereign debt positions further down the line."

Turkey is the world's 19th largest economy, according to the World Bank. It has noted that the Turkish economic crisis of the past five years has been accompanied by efforts to support economic growth "with credit booms and demand stimulus". Economists from Bloomberg estimate the Turkish central bank has spent more than $177bn supporting the lira since December 2021.

The Turkish Inflation Research Group (ENAG), which measures a basket of goods and services, recorded a 105.19% increase last month on the previous year.

The price of onions, a staple in Turkish cuisine, became a talking point in the election after Kılıçdaroğlu released a video stating: "Now, one kilogram of onions is 30 liras, if [Erdoğan] stays it will be 100 liras."

At an election rally, Erdoğan dismissed concerns about food prices. "Our cause is great. We know how to smash an onion with our fist and how to eat it. In this country, there is no [expensive] onion, potato or cucumber problem. We have already fixed problems in Turkey," he said.

105.19%

Price increases last month on the previous year, according to the Turkish Inflation Research Group

The US credit rating agency Fitch Ratings pointed to Turkey's dwindling foreign reserves caused by attempts to stabilise the lira.

"Regardless of who wins, the next government will still face a challenging economic backdrop characterised by pent-up foreign exchange demand and pressure on the lira, a wide current account deficit, declining international reserves and high inflation," it said.

The prospect that members of Turkey's six-party opposition coalition could secure victory and restore international confidence in the economy appeared increasingly unlikely.

Speaking before the first round of voting, the economist Bilge Yılmaz, of the nationalist IYI party, said the economic crisis could outstrip anything the country had endured in decades. "Turkey right now is deprived of foreign capital because it's not predictable, it's not trustworthy … there are effectively zero dollars left."

Tunisian court jails moderate Islamist leader for year over 'tyrant' remark

Associated Press
Tunis

The Tunisian moderate Islamist leader Rached Ghannouchi has been sentenced to a year in prison for allegedly referring to police officers as tyrants in what his party said was a sham trial.

Ghannouchi, 81, a founder of the Ennahda party, had refused to be removed from his place of detention for questioning or to attend Monday's trial because the cases were "political settling of scores targeting opponents of the regime", said the lawyer and former Ennahda minister Samir Dilou.

Ghannouchi, a former parliamentary speaker, is the most prominent critic of the Tunisian president, Kais Saied. He has maintained that Saied's move in 2021 to take all powers into his hands amounted to a coup d'état.

Ghannouchi was detained in mid-April on the charge of plotting against the security of the state. He has been called in by the authorities several times for questioning on various matters, but this was the first time that he was not released.

Monday's case grew out of a complaint by a security union member who claimed Ghannouchi had used the word *taghout*, or tyrant, while eulogising a member of his party during a funeral in February last year.

According to a tweet by Ghannouchi's daughter Soumaya, her father had said the deceased "did not fear poverty, ruler or tyrant".

Ennahda condemned the decision to prosecute Ghannouchi as "an unjust political ruling" and called for his immediate release.

Ghannouchi is also being investigated for what his party says is another case of twisting his words, in which he allegedly evoked the threat of civil war if Ennahda and other opposition parties were excluded from the political scene.

His party said on its English-language Twitter account that Ghannouchi had been charged with conspiracy against state security and had been ordered to remain in prison pending trial.

"Kais Saied is making a mockery of the judiciary, using it as a tool for political revenge and persecution," his daughter tweeted.

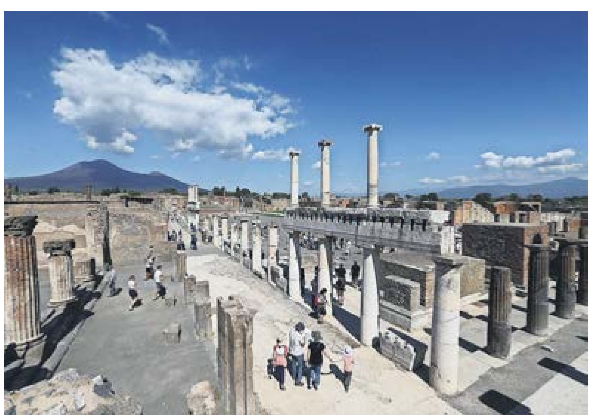
Approximately 20 other people, including the director of the Mosaique radio station, Noureddine Bouttar, have also been detained on a variety of charges.

The crackdown on opponents comes amid growing social tensions and deepening economic troubles in Tunisia, the birthplace of the Arab spring pro-democracy movement more than a decade ago.

Pompeii dig finds remains of pair buried by quake as eruption began

Angela Giuffrida
Jude Dunhill
Rome





▲ *The skull of one of the skeletons uncovered and, left, Pompeii's main square with Vesuvius in the background*

PHOTOGRAPHS: PARCO ARCHEOLOGICO DI POMPEI PRE/AFP/GETTY; MARCO CANTILE/LIGHTROCKET/GETTY

The remains of two people believed to have been killed by an earthquake that accompanied the AD79 eruption of Mount Vesuvius have been found in the ruins of the ancient Roman city of Pompeii.

The skeletons, thought to belong to two men in their mid-50s, were found during excavations at the Insula dei Casti Amanti, or Insula of the Chaste Lovers, an area of Pompeii made up of a cluster of homes and a bakery.

The well-preserved remains were found beneath a collapsed wall. Bone fractures indicate the men probably died as a result of multiple injuries sustained as the building they sought refuge in caved in when an earthquake struck during the early stage of the volcanic eruption.

One of the victims is thought to have raised his arm in an attempt to protect himself from the falling wall.

It is believed the wall collapsed before the arrival of the violent pyroclastic currents that buried the city.

Gabriel Zuchtriegel, the director of Pompeii archaeological park, said the discovery brought home even further "the hell" of the human dimension of the tragedy.

"As some of the archaeologists said, the discovery is very grounding as they are effectively digging up human beings, which is sad," he said. "Human mortality is so fragile … in Pompeii, the advancement of excavation techniques helps us to see more clearly the inferno that destroyed the city in two days."

Beads from a necklace and six coins - two dating back to the middle of the second century BC - were found in the same room as the victims.

The culture minister, Gennaro Sangiuliano, said: "Pompeii is an immense archaeological laboratory that in recent years has regained vigour, astonishing the world with the continuous discoveries brought to light and manifesting Italian excellence in this field."

The Pompeii ruins were discovered in the 16th century, with the first excavations beginning in 1748. More than 1,500 of the estimated 2,000 victims have been found over the centuries.

The last discovery of human remains was in 2020, when two skeletons, believed to be those of a wealthy man and his slave, were found during excavations at a villa on the outskirts of the city. The two men, lying close together, are believed to have escaped the initial phase of the eruption when the city was blanketed in volcanic ash and pumice, only to then be killed by a blast the following day.

‘Did the pope know?’

Country divided by ‘shameful’ claims that John Paul II covered up abuse



▼ *Pope John Paul II at the Vatican in October 1998. Polish MPs have called him ‘the greatest Pole in history’*
PHOTOGRAPH: PLINIO LEPRI/AP

Shaun Walker
Katarzyna Piasecka *Warsaw*

With under six months to go before a parliamentary election that is expected to be closely fought, a surprise figure has entered the Polish political field, despite the fact he died in 2005: Pope John Paul II.

The legacy of John Paul II, who was born Karol Wojtyła and was archbishop of Kraków before becoming pope in 1978, is under scrutiny after a recent book and television documentary accused him of covering up for paedophile priests before he became pontiff.

Poland, historically staunchly Catholic, has slowly been coming to terms with the scale of sexual abuse in the church, but until recently the figure of John Paul II, whom many Poles revere for his role in the ending of communist rule in the country, has remained untouchable.

That convention has been upturned by allegations in a documentary aired on Polish television station TVN earlier this year, and a concurrent book by the Dutch journalist Ekke Overbeek, who has lived in Poland for more than two decades and has written extensively on child abuse in the Polish church.

Overbeek said he found documents in the archives of the communist-era security services that prove beyond doubt that the sexual abuse of children by priests was an issue during Wojtyła’s tenure as archbishop of Kraków, and that the future pope helped to cover it up. “It’s obvious from the documents that he knew about the abuse,” said Overbeek, in an interview at a Warsaw cafe.

“He reacted to it by allowing the priests to continue their ministry. He was very forgiving towards the priests, whereas no evidence shows that he ever gave attention to the victims.”

> *‘Poland doesn’t have many recent role models. That’s why people defend him’*
>
> **Mateusz Klinowski**
> *Critic of the church*

The response to the allegations has been one of denial and fury. Two public events to promote the book were cancelled by the publishers, citing security fears after a sustained campaign against Overbeek in government media.

In the Polish parliament, the Sejm, MPs from the ruling Law and Justice (PiS) party arrived for a session in March holding photographs of the late pope, and passed a resolution to defend his name. It read: “The Sejm … strongly condemns the shameful media campaign, based largely on the materials of the communist apparatus of violence, whose object is the great Pope - Saint John Paul II, the greatest Pole in history.”

Wojtyła was born in the town of Wadowice in 1920; he was ordained in 1946 and made archbishop of Kraków in the early 1960s. He became the first non-Italian pope for more than four centuries, and made several visits back to Poland as pontiff. He was widely credited with galvanising opposition to communist rule and continued as pope until his death in 2005.

“I was very upset when I watched the documentary,” said Sławomir Abramowski, the priest in charge of a parish named after John Paul II in Bemowo, a neighbourhood of Warsaw. The church was built shortly after John Paul II was canonised in 2014, and has a large portrait of the late pope close to the altar. The documentary used a “crude manipulation of the facts” to smear John Paul II, said Abramowski, who credited the late pope with inspiring him to join the church in the early 1990s.

Among his congregation on a recent Sunday, when the church was full and more worshippers listened via speakers outside, there was a mood of defiance. Kamila, 38, who was carrying a baby, claimed John Paul II was a “huge opponent of paedophilia” and said the accusations were political. “The aim of this game is to discourage people from going to church, to destroy Polish identity and to repel people from family values.”

This strength of feeling helps explain why PiS has seized on the topic before parliamentary elections in October that are in the balance. A PiS-led coalition has ruled Poland since 2015, and draws much of its support from its rural, staunchly Catholic parts.

Mateusz Klinowski, the former mayor of Wadowice and an outspoken critic of the church, said he had no doubt the allegations against John Paul II were true. He said: “Among educated people, it’s been obvious for a long time that he was covering it up, but of course for politicians it’s a sweet piece of cake for preparing their campaigns.”

Jacek Karnowski, the editor-in-chief of the pro-government Sieci magazine, said he expected the pope’s legacy to be one of three issues the government would focus on in the upcoming election campaign, along with cost of living and the war in Ukraine. “They know that on the abortion issue, the majority is against them so they stay silent,” he said. “But 74% of Poles say John Paul II is an authority so this is very fertile ground for the government.”

In early April, thousands joined marches in Warsaw and other cities to defend the pope, including the defence minister and the head of the constitutional court.

Karnowski claimed the whole scandal had been part of a “political attack” on John Paul II coordinated by the liberal opposition to PiS, but others say that the opposition has been blindsided by the allegations and is trying to stay neutral, aware of how sensitive the issue is. A poll also showed that nearly half of Poles said they would not want to hear allegations against John Paul II even if they were true.



◀ *Protesters against the church hold a banner reading ‘Catholic church guilty’ in Kraków in March*
PHOTOGRAPH: BEATA ZAWRZEL/NURPHOTO/REX/SHUTTERSTOCK

John Paul II’s papacy, which lasted more than a quarter of a century, coincided with the first public scandals about sexual abuse in the Catholic church, which have since broken in numerous countries. Often, culprits were moved to different parishes rather than sacked or reported to police.

“Ever since these scandals broke, the question has always been ‘How much did the pope know?’” said Overbeek. “The answer was in Poland, and now we have the answer. He was aware of this issue from the very beginning.”

It is a conclusion a lot of people in Poland don’t want to hear, fearing the accusations could undermine John Paul II’s role and reputation as one of the key figures in the defeat of communism.

“Poland doesn’t have many recent characters we can use as role models,” said Klinowski. “That’s why people are so eager to defend him.”

FTSE 100	All share	Dow Indl	Nikkei 225	£/€	£/$
-26.62	-12.20	-194.45	+216.65	1.1500	1.2496
7751.08	4224.76	33154.15	29842.99	-0.0014	-0.0014

Business

Vodafone to axe 10% of staff in new boss's first big move

Mark Sweney

Vodafone is to cut 11,000 jobs from its global workforce over the next three years, the largest round of cuts in the troubled telecoms group's history.

The job losses amount to more than a 10th of the 104,000 global staff employed by Vodafone. The company employs about 9,000 people in the UK, including at its headquarters in Berkshire.

The cuts mark the first big move by Margherita Della Valle, appointed permanently as Vodafone's first female chief executive last month, who said the company needed to be leaner and more efficient.

"Our performance has not been good enough. To consistently deliver, Vodafone must change," she said.

The job losses will fall across Vodafone's entire operations - starting with its group functions, which are based in the UK, Germany, the company's biggest and worst-performing market, and Italy - with no indication of the scale of cuts in each market.

The cuts will free up an extra €100m (£87m) to be ploughed in to marketing to revitalise the Vodafone brand, and €150m to improve the customer experience. The wider restructuring includes a review of options for Vodafone's Spanish business, including a potential sale.

Vodafone, which has about 18 million UK mobile customers and more than 1 million broadband customers, is in the closing stages of pushing through a merger with Three to create the UK's biggest mobile company.

Della Valle said she hoped the deal to reduce the number of big UK mobile operators from four to three - something that has in the past been blocked by regulators over competition issues - would be given the go-ahead.

"I would say that the mood music has changed," she said. "There is a wide understanding that the problem of returns [on investment] is preventing Europe to develop 5G networks in line with the rest of the world. We don't have enough scale."

11,000
Number of jobs to be cut over the next three years across Vodafone's global operations to free up €100m

Shares in Vodafone fell more than 9%, making it the biggest faller on the FTSE 100 yesterday, as investors reacted to the news.

"Lacklustre performance has been something markets have come to expect from Vodafone of late," said Matt Britzman, an equity analyst at Hargreaves Lansdown. "The new chief executive has been very vocal about the host of challenges she's facing in her new role. The honesty is refreshing but not enough to keep the shares falling. Markets will need to see tangible results over the coming year before they get more excited."

In November, Vodafone cut its annual profit forecast and announced a €1bn-plus cost-cutting plan to cope with soaring energy bills and inflation. A month later, the company ousted the two-decade Vodafone veteran Nick Read after a 40% slump in market value during his four-year tenure as chief executive.



▶ *Vodafone is seeking ways to become more efficient before a planned merger with Three to create the UK's largest mobile company*
PHOTOGRAPH: ADRIAN DENNIS/AFP/GETTY

UK watchdog denies barring Microsoft deal on orders of US regulator

Alex Hern

The UK's competition watchdog has denied acting on the orders of the Federal Trade Commission in the US, as it defended its decision last month to block Microsoft's $69bn (£55bn) acquisition of the Call of Duty creator Activision Blizzard.

Sarah Cardell, chief executive of the Competition and Markets Authority, told MPs on the business and trade select committee yesterday that the CMA only acts on its own assessment of the validity of a merger.

"We are absolutely not doing the bidding of other agencies, we undertake our own analysis," Cardell said. "We have independent panel groups who are responsible for those decisions, and take those responsibilities incredibly seriously."

Cardell was responding to questions from the Conservative MP Bim Afolami, who pushed her to provide details of the CMA's communications with the FTC in the run-up to a contentious decision to block the deal.

Cardell said a legal agreement allowed the CMA to discuss specifics with the European Commission but that such a waiver was not in place for the FTC, preventing "detailed conversations" in the latter stages of the merger inquiry.

On Monday, the European Commission decided to allow the same merger, while the FTC has sued in an attempt to block it, throwing the ultimate decision to the courts.

"Our standard in the UK is that we have to establish on the balance of probabilities that it's more likely than not that the merger will result in a lessening of competition," Cardell said. She argued the standard in the US is a litigation standard but "the analysis is inherently the same". "That's also true for the European Commission. Our assessment is then subject to judicial review by the competition appeal tribunal in the UK. That is a rigorous process, and we take that incredibly seriously in making sure our case is well-evidenced."



▲ *Sarah Cardell said the decision was based on CMA's 'own analysis'*

Cryptocurrency trading should be regulated as gambling - MPs

Kalyeena Makortoff
Banking correspondent

The UK authorities should regulate cryptocurrency trading as a form of gambling rather than as a financial service, says a report by MPs on the Treasury committee published today.

The government must avoid wasting taxpayer funds promoting tech innovations such as digital tokens without demonstrating clear benefits to the public, it says.

Like gambling, cryptocurrency trading and investing can be addictive, the MPs say.

And while blockchain technology could benefit the wider financial services industry, betting on the volatile price of unbacked assets such as bitcoin could lead consumers to lose life-changing sums of cash. "Effective regulation is clearly needed to protect consumers from harm, as well as to support productive innovation in the UK's financial services industry," says the Conservative committee chair, Harriett Baldwin.

"However, with no intrinsic value, huge price volatility and no discernible social good, consumer trading of cryptocurrencies like bitcoin more closely resembles gambling than a financial service, and should be regulated as such."

The recommendations could influence government plans to regulate cryptocurrencies, which are being considered after a consultation earlier this year.

It was widely expected that cryptocurrency trading would fall under the Financial Conduct Authority, which is currently responsible for ensuring firms comply with money-laundering rules.

However, the Treasury committee said treating cryptocurrency trading or investing as a financial service - and regulating it via the FCA - risked creating a "halo effect" that could lead consumers to believe the industry was "safer than it is" or that they were protected from financial losses, when they are not.

Business view
Nils Pratley



Vodafone's new boss needs to dial up radicalism of reforms - and find some deals to make

It is remarkable that a company, even one as big as Vodafone, can announce 11,000 job cuts over three years but also say that no net cost savings will flow to the bottom line. A notional €250m (£220m) gain will be consumed entirely by reinvestment. Such is life in the world of European big telecoms - there are few simple wins.

But Vodafone's performance is worse than most of its peers. "Our performance has not been good enough," said the new chief executive, Margherita Della Valle, yesterday, telling shareholders what they knew already. The share price, down 7% yesterday, has more than halved over the past five years.

As the former finance director, Della Valle was the insider candidate for the top job, and thus not everybody's idea of a fresh start. One can, though, say this in her favour: in the plain-speaking department, she's an upgrade on her predecessor Nick Read.

Whereas Read seemed perpetually to be making excuses for setbacks (to the point where even Vodafone's traditionally indolent board was obliged to act), Della Valle is free to admit that the approach over the last few years has been "too incremental" and the company has baffled itself with internal complexity.

The cock-up in Germany, which ultimately cost Read his job, owed much to the failure both of head office in Paddington and management on the ground to recognise the significance of an unbundling change in local consumer law. Rivals grabbed a share in Vodafone's biggest market (30% of group revenues). So, yes, a simpler management structure and more local accountability sounds right. Critics have pointed at its bloated centre for years.

What, though, of the parallel demand that Vodafone should be simpler in the sense of owning fewer sub-scale operations? That is where the signal from Della Valle became scrambled.

In Spain (9% of revenues), where Vodafone was outflanked in the last round of market consolidation, there would be yet another "strategic review", but there were "no quick fixes", said Della Valle. In Italy (11%), where Read rejected a deal, the plan seems to be to plough on. Then there's the UK (14%), where talks with Three about a combo have yet to produce a deal. Agreement is still the way to bet, but a key question will be what remedies are demanded by the competition regulator; the answer may not be quick.

And, unfortunately for Della Valle, deal-making is the only thing likely to inject life into the share price. Pledges to improve customer service are worthy, but investors tend to take such stuff as read. If Vodacom, the African business, is staying, then something structurally big has to happen in one or more major European markets to move the dial.



▲ *Margherita Della Valle, the new CEO, has candour in her favour but is not everyone's idea of a fresh start*

The most revealing chart in Della Valle's presentation was the one about returns on capital. The UK, Italy and Spain were shown as recording returns below the group's cost of capital and even Germany - where Vodafone is the market leader - was just "around" cost of capital levels. That's a very poor starting position. The dividend was held this time but a 9% yield says the market wonders for how much longer.

> *If nothing else changes, the business will still look like a sprawling conglomerate valued at a massive discount to the sum of its parts*

The presence on the board of Emirates Telecommunications Group with a 14.6% stake offers the vague possibility of alternative excitement. Really, though, a turnaround comes down to Della Valle's ability to secure value-creating deals. If nothing else changes, Vodafone, even with 11,000 fewer workers, will still look like a sprawling conglomerate that is currently valued at a massive discount to the supposed sum of its parts. Nobody would design the structure today.

Della Valle deserves the benefit of the doubt, but the latest fall in the share price can't be blamed solely on the weak cashflow forecast for this year. Part of it surely reflects a sense that, for all her candour about Vodafone's performance, investors have yet to discover how radical she will be in cutting it down to coherent size. It's a tough gig, but shareholders' mood is for maximum radicalism.

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Business
Employment



▼ *Commuters making their way to work in London. The unemployment rate rose from 3.8% to 3.9% in the first three months of the year*
PHOTOGRAPH: ANDY RAIN/EPA

Labour pain

136,000
The decline in the number of workers on UK employers' payrolls between March and April

2.55m
The number of people inactive as a result of long-term sickness in the three months ending in April

556,000
The number of days lost through strike action in the UK in March, up from 332,000 in February

UK employers' payroll numbers fall for first time in two years

Larry Elliott
Economics editor

The number of workers on employers' payrolls dropped for the first time in two years last month amid signs the flatlining economy has begun to take a toll on Britain's labour market.

Fresh figures from the Office for National Statistics (ONS) showed a 136,000 fall in employees between March and April – the first reduction since February 2021.

Although the ONS said the data was provisional, the numbers on payrolls provided the most timely guide to the state of the jobs market and will be seen as evidence of a cooling in demand for labour. Despite April's fall, payrolls are more than 800,000 higher than they were in February 2020, the month before the UK went into its first Covid-19 lockdown.

The official figures showed employment and unemployment up in the first three months of 2023. With the cost of living crisis hitting household budgets, there was a record flow of people out of inactivity and into work. The unemployment rate rose unexpectedly to 3.9% from 3.8%.

Job vacancies fell by 55,000 to just over a million in the three months ending in April, the 10th consecutive quarterly drop. The number of people inactive as a result of long-term sickness reached a record 2.55 million.

The ONS director of economic statistics production and analysis, Darren Morgan, said: "Employment and unemployment rose again in the first three months of 2023, driven in particular by men.

"This means the number of those neither working nor looking for work continues to fall, although the number of people not working due to long-term sickness rose again, to a new record."

Despite the highest pay growth in the public sector for two decades, the ONS said workers in public and private sectors were becoming worse off because prices were rising faster than wages. Average regular pay growth was 7% in the private sector and 5.6% in the public sector for the January to March period, but the cost of living rose by 10.1% in the year to March.

Meanwhile, the number of days lost through strike action rose from 332,000 in February to 556,000 in March, with 80% of the total the result of action in the health and education sectors.

Kitty Ussher, the chief economist at the Institute of Directors, said: "A combination of high costs and cash-strapped consumers is now causing some businesses to hesitate before hiring, uncertain as to what the future holds."

Chris Thomas, the head of the commission on health and prosperity at the Institute for Public Policy Research thinktank, said: "More people are now out of work due to ill-health than any other time since records began. This is a damning indictment of this government's record on our health.

"Long-term sickness is fatally undermining our economy and holding back people's ability to live long, happy and prosperous lives."

Jeremy Hunt, the chancellor of the exchequer , said it was "encouraging" that the unemployment rate had remained low at 3.9%, despite the 0.1-point rise in the three months to March.

Interest rates
Jobs market coming off the boil as businesses think twice about hiring

Phillip Inman

There are signs the Bank of England's interest rate rises are making businesses think twice about investing in new staff, bringing down the number of vacancies. At the same time, the cost of living is driving more people back into work.

The effect shows up in the latest labour figures from the Office for National Statistics (ONS) as a fall of 55,000 in the number of vacancies in the three months to April and a 156,000 drop in the number of inactive workers.

Separate HMRC figures showed a 136,000 fall in PAYE employees between March and April – the first reduction since February 2021.

Together, these figures tell us the UK's pressure-cooker labour market – with more advertised jobs than workers to fill them – has begun to come off the boil.

When the Bank's main concern relates to the tightness of the labour market, reflected in a high vacancy rate, these trends will be welcomed by anyone who wants interest rates to fall and growth to pick up.

Businesses welcomed the fall in vacancies, even though it is partly due to firms going out of business or being too worried to hire new staff. They haven't welcomed the continuing mismatch between the skills they need and the people looking for work.

The British Chambers of Commerce head of people policy, Jane Gratton said: "Skills shortages and unfilled job vacancies are the stark reality for many businesses across all sectors and regions. We still have more than a million job vacancies which are damaging the economy by preventing firms from fulfilling order books and taking on new work." Kitty Ussher, the chief economist at the Institute of Directors, added: "There are still 282,000 more vacancies in the UK than before the pandemic. Government policy needs to work harder to ensure that our education and training system is providing the types of skills that employers are looking for."

The ONS said its surveys found that people of all ages were returning to work who had previously said they were caring for relatives or retired, though the biggest number of returners were job-hunting students.

> *'We still have 282,000 more vacancies than before the pandemic'*
>
> **Kitty Ussher**
> *Institute of Directors*

Another month of falling wages relative to inflation – the 16th consecutive fall in real pay using the ONS's three-month average – has also forced many workers to take on a second or third job.

The health system is also the focus of attention after the number of people off work with a long-term illness hit a record 2.55 million. One of the largest increases in ill-health was among those off work with a mental health issue. Ben Harrison, the director of the Work Foundation thinktank at Lancaster University, said the number of people opting out of work on grounds of ill health "suggests a radically different approach is needed to boost the UK workforce".

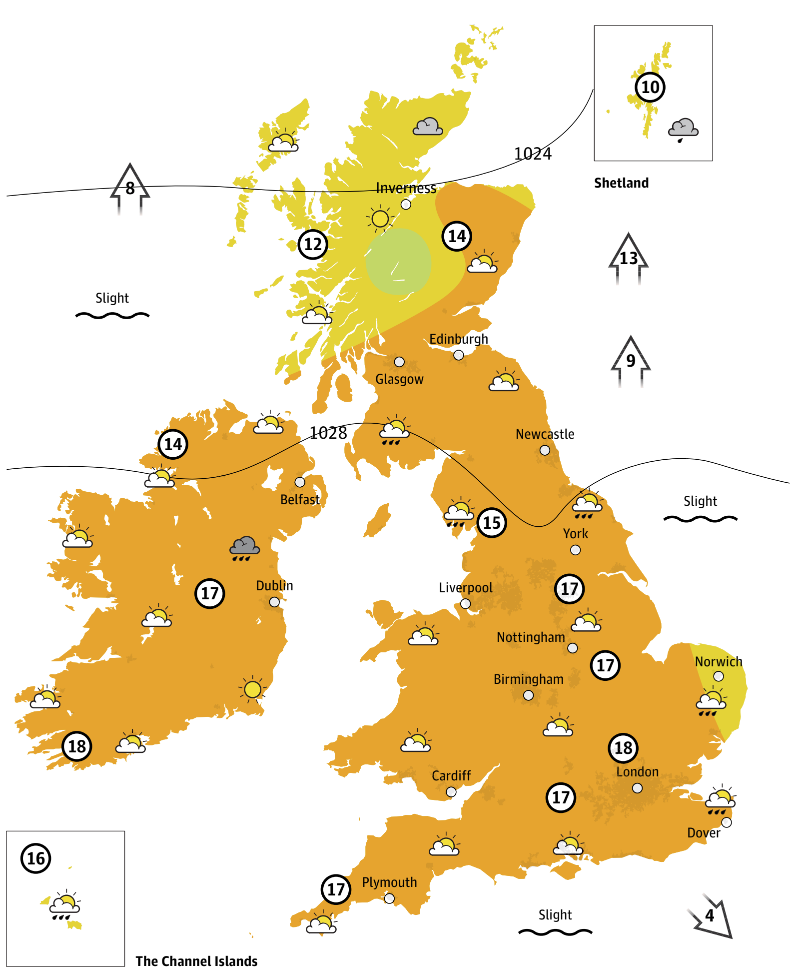
Circumstances are not the same in continental Europe. The activity rate in France, Germany and even Italy is higher than it was before the pandemic. In Britain, it is lower with more than 400,000 fewer workers than in 2019.

Weather
Wednesday 17 May 2023

UK and Ireland Noon today

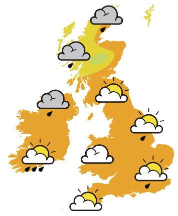
Sunny · Mist · Fog · Sunny intervals · Hazy · Mostly cloudy · Overcast/dull · Sunny showers · Sunny and heavy showers · Light showers · Rain · Sleet · Light snow · Snow showers · Heavy snow · Ice · Thundery rain · Thundery showers · Temperature, ºC · Wind speed, mph · Windy

35C, 30, 25, 20, 15, 10, 5, 0, -5, -10, -15, -20

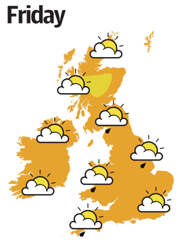


Forecast

Low 8 High 18
Tomorrow



Low 9 High 19
Friday



Carbon count

Daily atmospheric CO_2 readings from Mauna Loa, Hawaii (ppm):

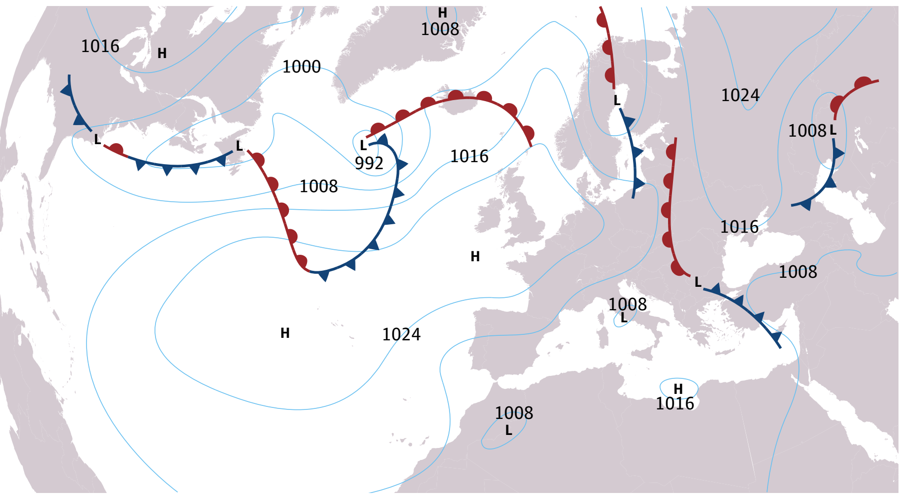
Latest	
15 May 2023	424.27
Weekly average	
07 May 2023	424.29
16 May 2022	420.75
16 May 2013	399.74
Pre-industrial base	*280*
Safe level	*350*

Source: NOAA-ESRL

Around the UK

City	Low	High	Precipitation	Air pollution
London	9	18	25%	Low
Manchester	8	16	10%	Low
Edinburgh	10	16	25%	Low
Belfast	9	17	25%	Low
Birmingham	8	17	25%	Low
Brighton	8	16	25%	Low
Bristol	10	16	10%	Low
Cardiff	9	17	10%	Low
Newcastle	9	17	25%	Low
Penzance	11	16	0%	Low

Atlantic front



Cold front
Warm front
Occluded front
Trough

Plantwatch

Cycads are the most threatened group of plants in the world. These ancient plants date back about 280m years, before the age of the dinosaurs, and they look primeval, with a rugged chunky trunk rising into a crown of stiff feathery leaves.

They are disappearing as their tropical forest habitats are rapidly vanishing, and they also face extinction from an illegal multimillion-pound global trade in wild cycads. The rarer they become, the more their value increases, with some individual specimens selling for millions of pounds each.

The loss of such rare plants removes their gene pool from the wild, depletes their numbers and brings them closer to extinction. Poachers can also destroy whole habitats plundering the plants, and the trafficked specimens are at risk of disease. Trying to protect the cycads is highly dangerous, and rangers in Kruger national park in South Africa have been killed by people trying to steal the plants.

There are no dedicated funds or organisations to combat the illegal cycad trade. If these were giant pandas, black rhinos or elephants there would be an outcry - a familiar story for other endangered, rare plants. **Paul Simons**

Around the world

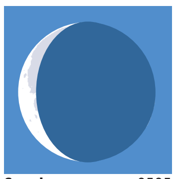
City	°C	City	°C
Algiers	23	Lisbon	29
Ams'dam	14	Madrid	24
Athens	23	Malaga	22
Auckland	18	Melb'rne	14
B Aires	21	Mexico C	24
Bangkok	38	Miami	33
Barcelona	21	Milan	20
Basra	39	Mombasa	30
Beijing	24	Moscow	23
Berlin	15	Mumbai	33
Bermuda	25	N Orleans	28
Brussels	16	Nairobi	25
Budapest	18	New Delhi	40
C'hagen	13	New York	18
Cairo	36	Oslo	17
Cape Town	19	Paris	17
Chicago	17	Perth	25
Corfu	21	Prague	13
Dakar	26	Reykjavik	11
Dhaka	33	Rio de J	24
Dublin	17	Rome	20
Florence	17	Shanghai	22
Gibraltar	21	Singapore	32
H Kong	31	Stockh'm	10
Harare	25	Strasb'g	17
Helsinki	15	Sydney	17
Istanbul	18	Tel Aviv	28
Jo'burg	18	Tenerife	25
K Lumpur	33	Tokyo	27
K'mandu	28	Toronto	12
Kabul	25	Vancouv'r	21
Kingston	32	Vienna	11
Kolkata	35	Warsaw	13
L Angeles	24	Wash'ton	23
Lagos	31	Well'ton	16
Lima	23	Zurich	15

High tides

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Aberdeen	0030	3.9m	1233	4.0m
Avonmouth	0615	12.4m	1841	12.5m
Barrow	1032	8.9m	2304	8.8m
Belfast	1017	3.4m	2245	3.3m
Cobh	0428	3.9m	1652	3.8m
Cromer	0556	4.6m	1748	4.9m
Dover	1034	6.2m	2246	6.5m
Dublin	1050	3.9m	2327	3.8m
Galway	0413	4.8m	1639	4.9m
Greenock	--	--	1137	3.3m
Harwich	1054	3.9m	2307	3.8m
Holyhead	0925	5.4m	2159	5.3m
Hull	0533	6.9m	1729	7.3m
Leith	0135	5.2m	1345	5.3m
Liverpool	1014	8.9m	2246	8.8m
London Bridge	0035	6.6m	1309	6.8m
Lossiemouth	1050	3.8m	2332	3.8m
Milford Haven	0516	6.6m	1742	6.5m
Newquay	0410	6.5m	1635	6.4m
North Shields	0234	4.7m	1438	4.8m
Oban	0503	3.7m	1721	3.5m
Penzance	0343	5.2m	1611	5.2m
Plymouth	0445	5.2m	1716	5.2m
Portsmouth	1027	4.4m	2301	4.7m
Southport	0942	8.6m	2214	8.5m
Stornoway	0557	4.5m	1833	4.4m
Weymouth	0510	1.1m	1742	1.1m
Whitby	0307	5.1m	1514	5.3m
Wick	1023	3.2m	2304	3.2m
Workington	1038	7.9m	2306	7.8m

Sun & Moon



Sun rises	0505
Sun sets	2048
Moon rises	0410
Moon sets	1825
New Moon	19 May

AccuWeather.com

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Lighting up

Belfast	2127 to 0514
Birm'ham	2059 to 0507
Brighton	2046 to 0508
Bristol	2058 to 0516
Carlisle	2115 to 0459
Cork	2123 to 0537
Dublin	2122 to 0521
Glasgow	2127 to 0501
Harlech	2110 to 0515
Inverness	2135 to 0449
London	2048 to 0504
M'chester	2105 to 0505
Newcastle	2111 to 0454
Norwich	2048 to 0454
Penzance	2104 to 0532

Cricket
Foakes is right to feel aggrieved at England snub
Ali Martin, page 38 →

Tennis
Djokovic hits out at Norrie over 'not fair play'
Page 37 →



Sport

David Squires on … the travails of Arsenal, Southampton and Jordan Pickford



David Squires archive Peruse our resident cartoonist's previous work at *theguardian.com/profile/david-squires*

Rugby union
Robert Kitson



Farrell and Ford face off in final with England watching closely

The first rule of finals rugby is the same as it ever was. The team that maintain their composure when the pressure starts to mount are generally the side that prevail. And if your playmakers can display a sure touch in the final quarter, your odds shorten even more.

There were some good examples last weekend, not least from Munster's Jack Crowley. When the moment came to nail Leinster with a late drop-goal the 23-year-old was more than equal to the challenge to book his team a place in the United Rugby Championship final against the Stormers in Cape Town. It underlined why several good judges believe he has a lengthy Test career ahead of him.

In the cases of Owen Farrell and George Ford, however, a more urgent debate is resurfacing. Farrell and Ford have 190 England caps between them and were instrumental in steering, respectively, Saracens and Sale to this season's Premiership final. Their eagerly awaited Twickenham duel on Saturday week is now freighted with extra significance. Which of them will end up being lobbed the keys to No 10 when England kick off their World Cup campaign against Argentina in September?

It is a familiar question with a fascinating fresh twist. Because Ford, 30, and Farrell, 31, have come through periods of turbulence to become properly rounded, mature match-winners. In Ford's case, injury and the emergence of Marcus Smith threatened to marginalise him at Test level. Farrell had the England captaincy taken from him last year and lost his goal-kicking mojo. Now, with a World Cup less than four months away, both look as composed and influential on the field as they have ever done.

Their coaches waxed lyrical about them at the weekend with good reason. Farrell's – and Saracens' – option-taking was outstanding against Northampton and his full range of kicking skills was in glorious evidence.

Ford's contribution, though, was even more telling. As Leicester's young half-backs tightened up in the last quarter and started making costly errors, the former Tiger was tactically spot-on. He lacks Farrell's physical presence but few see the game more clearly.

However, Smith is also a player of rare talent. Watching Ford in recent weeks, though, it is impossible not to wonder about the potential shorter-term implications for the national side. In the end it is less a matter of which of the three is the best player as who would be the snuggest fit right now for an England side in need of more direction. And if an imperious Ford somehow navigates Sale past Farrell and Saracens, the England head coach, Steve Borthwick, may have little choice but to trust the evidence of his own eyes.

Because a more controlled, clear-eyed England would instantly be a different proposition. And if Ford, whom Borthwick knows well from their Leicester days, can be that all-seeing catalyst, why would the management not pick him? In the past the argument has been that Ford's goal-kicking has been slightly less reliable and that he is a less hard-hitting defender. Now he is nailing pretty much every kick and is displaying the all-round clarity and purpose that once led to him being crowned the world junior player of the year.

So if England wish to reboot themselves without throwing everything into the mixer again the solution is staring them in the face. In that event the only issue would be whether Farrell should revert to No 12 alongside his good mate or sit on the bench. Clearly though, there is no way England will omit Farrell from their World Cup squad, which leaves Smith as the most vulnerable of the trio.

So, yes, one man alone is not going to win the Premiership final. If Sale's forwards cannot establish any momentum, their fly-half will look as mortal as anyone else. But Ford is one more five-star display away from transforming the landscape in terms of this autumn's World Cup. How Farrell reacts to that challenge will be similarly fascinating. The winner could yet be English rugby.



▲ *Owen Farrell (left) and George Ford meet in the Premiership final*

Taylor gets homecoming at last but shadow lingers over Irish boxing



▼ *Katie Taylor faces Chantelle Cameron in Dublin on Saturday*
JAMES MANNING/PA

Elite boxing has been absent from Ireland since 2016 after a gangland murder at a Dublin weigh-in. On Saturday it returns but uncertainty surrounds icon's first pro fight on home soil



Donald McRae

The lonely passion of Katie Taylor will feel more intense than ever on Saturday night in Dublin. As the most significant female boxer in the world, and the most cherished sporting personality in Ireland, Taylor will fight professionally in her home country for the first time. At 36, as an Olympic champion with a flawless 22-0 pro record, Taylor remains remarkably humble and devoted to boxing. But uncertainty surrounds her homecoming.

Taylor, the undisputed world lightweight champion, has moved up a division to challenge Chantelle Cameron who defends all her belts as the imposing super-lightweight world champion at the 3Arena - less than three miles from the scene of a gangland murder which prevented major boxing promotions in Ireland for the past seven years.

On 5 February 2016 at the Regency Hotel a boxing weigh-in was invaded by four gunmen who killed David Byrne, a member of the Kinahan drug-running gang. The attackers were linked to the Hutch gang and the Irish police, the Garda, believe their intended target was Daniel Kinahan. The murderous feud between the Kinahan and Hutch cartels had been sparked by a different shooting in August 2014.



▲ *Cameron will defend her super-lightweight titles at the 3Arena*

Jamie Moore, who will be in Cameron's corner as her chief trainer, was shot twice outside Kinahan's home near Marbella. It was another case of mistaken identity as the authorities eventually established that the shooters had been aiming to kill Kinahan. A month later, while convalescing at home in Manchester, Moore told me how lucky he had been, as one bullet missed an artery by millimetres, and that Kinahan was "a good bloke" in the sense that he supported boxers.

But it has since been accepted in the Irish courts that the Kinahan Organised Crime Group is "involved in drug trafficking, money laundering and gangland executions" worth more than a billion dollars. Daniel Kinahan fled Ireland soon after the Regency attack and he, his father and his brother have been wanted by the Garda and European law enforcement agencies.

In 2012 Kinahan had set up a boxing management company called MGM, with Matthew Macklin, whom Moore had fought against in 2006 before becoming his trainer. MGM eventually became known as MTK Global.

Kinahan established himself as a boxing power-broker, and continued despite being in hiding, and MTK represented hundreds of fighters across Britain, Ireland and the US. They instigated a ban on all Irish media who shone a light on MTK's links with Kinahan.

Meanwhile, 18 people have been murdered in the ongoing war between the Kinahan and Hutch gangs. As a result the Garda and insurance companies refused to support professional boxing in Ireland. There have been some small-hall shows but not one promotion of consequence since 2016.

Taylor, an Olympic champion who turned pro that year, has been shut out of her own country. Despite being deeply private, she has been hurt by her exile. Her homecoming will spark an emotional reunion with her adoring fans but the Kinahan saga and the looming battle with Cameron make this a fraught week.

Eric Donovan, a close friend of Taylor's since they were both on the Irish team in the late 1990s, says: "Katie is such a gentle soul, almost saint-like, but when the bell goes she transforms into this absolute machine and becomes a bad ass. It's a beautiful, extraordinary thing."

'Katie is such a gentle soul, almost saint-like, but when the bell goes she transforms'

Kieran Cunningham, a Dublin journalist who has covered Taylor's career for 15 years, has made an absorbing and fascinating four-part podcast called Untouchable: How Katie Taylor Changed the World. "An annual survey identifies the most admired sportsperson in Ireland," he says. "Katie wins year after year at a canter. In second place you would have, depending on the time, Roy Keane, Brian O'Driscoll or Rory McIlroy. Big stars in global sports. Katie's so understated but people like the quietness in her that contradicts what they see in the ring. But being a game-changer is the main reason she's so admired."

In 2001, aged 15, Taylor fought in the first officially sanctioned female boxing bout in Ireland. Cunningham also points out that Taylor is one of the main reasons why women's boxing became part of the Olympics. In November 2007, Taylor and Canada's Katie Dunn fought an exhibition to gauge whether women's boxing was worthy of an Olympic slot. "Taylor fought out of her skin," Cunningham says. "She won over the doubters and women's boxing was given a ticket to the five-ringed circus."

It took Donovan time to understand his friend's

importance: "Katie was just one of the lads to me. She was so good but, at 13, I was too young to understand the magnitude of this one girl taking part in a man's sport."

Taylor would spar with a future two-weight world champion in Carl Frampton – and her gym wars with Paddy Barnes, who won two Olympic medals, became legendary. But Donovan sparred with her more than anyone. "I used to be the opposite of Katie," he says. "I was an extrovert, a bit wild, but Katie was a huge part of my life. We sparred from 15 and I was her chief sparring partner for London 2012."

Donovan's expression clouds briefly. "That was bittersweet because I was a prime candidate for those Olympics. I was in the world top 10 but I had mental issues from childhood trauma. I slipped into addiction."

He broke his hand during a drunken scrap and lost his chance to fight at the 2012 Games. Donovan slid into depression but "our coach rang me up and said: 'Look, Eric, will you go to Italy, spar Katie, get her ready for Sofya Ochigava' – the Russian girl she'd meet in the final. She's a southpaw. I'm a southpaw. She beat Katie before. She was a big threat.

"Katie was under immense pressure. A huge banner of Katie covered the side of a building in Dublin. It said: 'Only the strongest shoulders can carry the hopes of a nation.' Here was a woman with the hopes of a nation to win Olympic gold and she was my friend needing my help. I had to see it as a privilege even though I felt I should have been competing. But it was lovely to be a small part of Katie's success."

Cunningham remembers that, before Taylor beat Ochigava in the final, "her first fight was at the Excel Arena against Natasha Jonas. The crowd broke the decibel record at those Games because Katie's Irish supporters made more noise than Super Saturday [when Mo Farah, Jessica Ennis and Greg Rutherford won gold for Great Britain at the 2012 Olympics]."

Ireland's love affair with the reclusive Taylor has deepened despite the absence of professional boxing. And last April it seemed as if the net had closed on Kinahan. At an extraordinary press conference in Dublin, the US government vowed to bring Kinahan, and named associates, to justice. MTK collapsed soon afterwards and it seemed that Kinahan's pernicious hold on boxing had been broken.

But there are persistent rumours Kinahan is still negotiating deals for fighters and talking to major promoters. Cunningham says: "Boxing has carried on as normal. Nothing in terms of its governance has changed. People say Kinahan is pulling the strings behind the scenes with some big fights."

The Regency shooting has been headline news again. Gerry Hutch was acquitted of murdering Byrne and released from prison in April. But last Friday two men were found guilty of providing getaway vehicles from the Regency and sentenced to lengthy jail terms.



▲ *Taylor was at her best in her win over Amanda Serrano*
MATCHROOM BOXING/INPHO/SHUTTERSTOCK

There are other uncomfortable reminders in the build-up to Taylor's homecoming. After Cameron became the undisputed world champion in Abu Dhabi last November she was joined in the ring by Anthony Fitzpatrick. For Cunningham, "Fitzpatrick is an important figure even if we don't know his exact connection to Cameron.

"Fitzpatrick had a key managerial role in MTK and he lived in a mansion in Dublin owned by Kinahan. That mansion was seized by the Criminal Assets Bureau last year. There's no suggestion Fitzpatrick has any involvement in criminality, but he does have connections to Kinahan. I've sent a request to Cameron's team asking about the connection to Fitzpatrick and whether, following the court linking him to Kinahan, they had any concerns. I didn't get a response."

As Cunningham stresses, there is no evidence that Fitzpatrick has ever condoned or been involved in any form of criminality. The same applies to Cameron who is focused on her boxing career. She only joined MTK in February 2019 – at a time when the company had distanced itself from Kinahan.

Cunningham, one of the most dogged reporters on Kinahan's trail, says: "It's right that questions are asked. Jamie Moore has been supportive of Kinahan. At the press conference in Dublin I asked him whether he regrets that support. He said: 'We're not here to talk about that. We're here to focus on the fight.' I said this fight is taking place in the north inner city where most people in the Kinahan feud were killed. It's also the first big fight since all this exploded. He stonewalled again."

Cunningham and Donovan express trepidation when considering Cameron's threat in the ring. "I've talked to a few people who really know boxing and they think Cameron will beat Taylor," Cunningham says of the Northampton fighter who has won all 17 of her fights. Donovan admits: "You can see the size difference. I'm confident of Katie winning but this is a very dangerous fight. There's absolutely no doubt this could go wrong."

'It was terrible. Irish boxing never recovered. It's only now we're seeing a resurrection'

In describing Taylor's "lonely passion", which alludes to Brian Moore's moving Belfast novel, The Lonely Passion of Judith Hearne, Cunningham evokes her extraordinary resolve in the solitary business of boxing. But he believes "Katie will feel real pressure because the fight will dominate news bulletins all week and 95% of the crowd will be behind her. It's a massive test."

Taylor is often at her best under searing pressure. She showed that last April when, in one of the greatest fights I have seen live, she beat Amanda Serrano in the first women's bout to headline Madison Square Garden. "She came through that storm and finished like a train," Donovan recalls. "Something similar might happen here but Cameron is strong."

Donovan pauses when considering Taylor's homecoming after the Regency murder brought boxing to a halt in Ireland. "It was terrible. Irish boxing never recovered and it's only now we're starting to see a resurrection. The sad part is that boxing provides so much opportunity for marginalised communities. Boxing puts respect and pride into those communities and makes champions of people who might not have other opportunities. The sport I love got dragged into the gutter but Katie is helping bring back the glory. We are only a small island, but some of the greatest nights in this country have come in a boxing ring."

Taylor has shaped some of those great nights, in rings far from home, and she now has a chance to do so again in Dublin.

"I actually felt she should have walked away after she beat Serrano," Donovan says. "She had changed the game forever. But the closer we come to this fight the more I understand that boxing is her life. How can you even suggest to somebody who lives for boxing that she should give up? Whenever I am with Katie I see a complete and wholesome person who is hungry to keep raising the bar in boxing. She's incredible."

Tennis

Norrie accused of unsporting behaviour by Djokovic

Tumaini Carayol

Novak Djokovic criticised Cameron Norrie's sportsmanship after their frosty contest yesterday in the fourth round of the Italian Open.

Djokovic, the men's top seed and defending champion, defeated the 13th seed 6-3, 6-4 in a tense match to reach the quarter-finals of the Italian Open for a record 17th consecutive year, a run that dates back to his first appearance in 2007.

The most notable moment of contention came during the second set. During one point, both players ended up at the net but a weak reflex lob from Djokovic presented Norrie with an easy overhead to finish the point.

With the point surely over, Djokovic turned and began walking back to the baseline but, seemingly by accident, Norrie struck the back of Djokovic's foot with his smash. As Norrie put a hand up in apology, Djokovic turned and stared at Norrie. After the match, however, Djokovic acknowledged the overhead may have been unintentional.

"I did watch the replay," he said. "Yeah, maybe you could say he didn't hit me deliberately. I mean, peripheralically [sic] you can always see where the player is positioned on the court. The ball was super slow and close to the net. I just turned around because the point was over for me."

The No 1 seed was less forgiving of Norrie for other qualms he had during the match. Djokovic described his issues as a "combination of things", including Norrie's frequent and vocal fist-pumping after successful points from early in the match and the medical timeout he took before Djokovic served for the match at 5-4. After the match Djokovic gave Norrie an extremely cold handshake.

"From the beginning, he was doing all the things that were allowed," Djokovic said. "He's allowed to take a medical timeout. He's allowed to hit a player. He's allowed to say 'c'mon' in the face more or less every point from basically the first game. Those are the things we players know it's not fair play, it's not how we treat each other. But, again, it's allowed, so …"

Norrie is well liked on the tour and is rarely involved in any sort of drama with other players. Djokovic acknowledged the pair had a good relationship off the court. "He's a nice guy off the court, so I don't understand this kind of attitude on the court. But it is what it is. He brought the fire, and I responded to that … What happens on the court, we leave on the court, and we move on."

Meanwhile the top seed and defending champion, Iga Swiatek, reached the last eight with a 6-3, 6-4 win against Donna Vekic. Swiatek will next look for revenge against Elena Rybakina, the Wimbledon champion, who has twice defeated her in straight sets this year.



▲ *Cameron Norrie was beaten in straight sets by Novak Djokovic*

Golf

McIlroy makes promise to keep quiet on LIV and focus on US PGA

Ewan Murray
Oak Hill

Rory McIlroy has promised a vow of silence on matters attached to LIV Golf with the Northern Irishman determined to focus fully on his own performance for the remainder of 2023.

McIlroy's position at the forefront of the PGA Tour's resistance to the rebel LIV tour has seen him questioned continually regarding off-course matters. Speaking at Oak Hill, where he hopes to win a third US PGA Championship, he was curt when the likely future of LIV was put to him.

"I don't have a crystal ball," he said. He followed up with a firm "no" when asked whether he would care to speculate and an equally direct "yes" over whether sidestepping the LIV storyline was a deliberate effort.

"I would rather people be talking about me for my golf rather than stuff that I am doing behind the scenes or what I have said in a press conference.

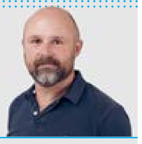
"I don't regret anything I have done because I think what has been done will help the guys on tour right now and help the next generation of players hopefully have a better professional tour. But now the wheels have been set in motion it is time to focus on me and playing great golf."

McIlroy's missed cut last month at the Masters came as a shock. The four-time major winner had looked in fine spirits before the tournament.

"I was never so sure I was going to have a great week at Augusta. And then that happens. It was a great lesson for me to not put too much into feelings or vibes. I shot five under on the back nine on the Wednesday and felt great. I had a chat with [the sports psychologist] Bob Rotella that night and said: 'I feel so good. Like, how can I not get ahead of myself?' But that's golf.

"Golf can bring you back down to earth quickly. I think the best way to deal with that is to not let yourself get to that level of expectation so early. That's sort of what I'm trying to do, take what the golf course gives me and hit good golf shots. If I work on that, and do the right things, I know I'll start to play some really good golf."

Cricket
Ali Martin



England cut is harsh on Foakes but decision offers Ashes clarity

Surrey didn't hang about. Just 10 minutes after the England squad was announced, confirming Jonny Bairstow's return behind the stumps for Ireland and thus the start of the Ashes summer, and with Ben Foakes missing from the list of 15 players, the club's Twitter feed fired up in solidarity with the fall guy.

"The best keeper in the world was at it again last week," read the pointed post, accompanied by a lightning emoji and a video of his silken glove work during the win against Middlesex. Alec Stewart gave Foakes that title a couple of years back and Ben Stokes has repeated it a good few times since.

But with Bairstow fit again and keeping for Yorkshire following that gruesome leg break, and his stand-in, Harry Brook, having scorched his way through the Test winter in eye-catching fashion, the panel had to find a way to accommodate the player who didn't so much start the Bazball revolution as blast it into orbit.

They could have delayed the call, putting both men in the squad to face Ireland at Lord's from 1 June. But while it has angered a good few supporters, tapping into that longstanding English debate about keepers and keeper-batters, Stokes, Rob Key, Brendon McCullum and co cannot be accused of dithering. Naming Dan Lawrence as the spare batter also means clarity for all concerned.

Foakes does have grounds to feel aggrieved. Over the past year he has largely kept up those standards with the gloves, turned around the series against South Africa with a fine hundred at Old Trafford, and been one half of four century stands. As Key admitted, the 30-year-old has played a big part in the run of 10 wins from 12 Tests.

Foakes has been here before, St Lucia in 2019 to be precise, when he was jettisoned for Bairstow before an Ashes summer. And during his media outings over the recent winter – a winter which included being left out to accommodate an extra fast bowler in Multan – there was admission that Bairstow's return was likely and his best bet was not to stress it.

As Foakes broods, it may be that he rues that epic final-day defeat in Wellington in February where, having clawed England back into the chase, he holed out seven runs short of the target. This need not be the end, though, with injuries possible and his excellence on spinning tracks likely needed for the five-Test tour of India next year.

Some will argue it didn't have to be a binary decision. Zak Crawley's lurching returns from opener would make him vulnerable in other sides. The notion of Stokes moving up felt fanciful, but Bairstow? He has opened just once in first-class cricket, but given the job England are demanding at the top of the order, a personal view is his 50-over game *could* possibly have been transplanted.

It was probably too late in the project, not least given a venomous new-ball attack such as Australia's. And McCullum has also been consistent that, for all his tactical innovation, crowbarring players into unfamiliar slots is not his style.

England have concluded that the potential power Bairstow offers with the bat at No 7 – along with more than competent keeping – makes him the option Australia would least prefer. The Yorkshireman may average just 26 in home Ashes but that century in Sydney in 2022, and that hot streak of four in five innings last summer, is more relevant.

Elsewhere, the squad largely picked itself given available resources. Jimmy Anderson is touch and go for Ireland and Chris Woakes is a proven option behind Stuart Broad, Ollie Robinson and Matthew Potts. Mark Wood, the last of the fast men standing, has not played a first-class match since Pakistan but has shown he can tailor his preparation sufficiently without this.

Along with Bairstow's return to the demands of a dual role so soon after a major injury, questions now surround whether Stokes is able to bowl, whether Brook can recapture his form after a struggle in the Indian Premier League, and whether this move to plump for almost outright aggression from one to seven in the lineup can work in the white heat of an Ashes contest. As ever, the beauty comes in finding out.

Test squad

Ben Stokes (capt), Jimmy Anderson, Jonny Bairstow (wkt) (📷), Stuart Broad, Harry Brook, Zak Crawley, Ben Duckett, Dan Lawrence, Jack Leach, Ollie Pope, Matthew Potts, Ollie Robinson, Joe Root, Chris Woakes, Mark Wood



Sport
Football



▼ *Tom Lockyer (left) heads home to give Luton a 2-0 lead on the night*
SHAUN BOTTERILL/GETTY IMAGES

Sky Bet Championship playoffs *Semi-final, second leg*

Lockyer the key in Luton's comeback to seal Wembley date

Luton	**2**
Osho 10, Lockyer 43	
Sunderland	**0**

Luton Town win 3-2 on agg

Nick Ames
Kenilworth Road

At full time the Kenilworth Road pitch filled with incredulous fans, one of them claiming a shirt from the striker Elijah Adebayo and a few others setting off orange flares. Should any minor repairs be needed, Luton Town can add them to the £10m bill that would be required for ground renovations upon promotion and it is unlikely they will mind. One match lies between them and the top flight: for a club that was clawing its way out of the National League nine years ago it is a staggering achievement and, as the revellers eventually acceded to requests they return to the stands, the possibility of further celebrations on 27 May felt tantalisingly real.

It will be a wonder if, upon waking up today, any of the 9,000 raucous home supporters will have the capacity to vocalise exactly how this felt. Many of them waited for Rob Edwards's players to emerge from the dressing room one last time to soak in the adulation. If the team had produced then their faithful had too, combining to create a blistering atmosphere inside this eccentric old venue and an environment Sunderland could not handle. Coventry or Middlesbrough will have to deal with the awesome energy and power of this Luton side at Wembley if this season is to be denied its greatest story.

"We had to mix it up and be horrible and dirty and that's how we won the game," said the Luton captain, Tom Lockyer, who barely lost a challenge in either penalty area all night. When Alfie Doughty swung yet another ball into Sunderland's box two minutes before half-time it was Lockyer, the thought of coming second best never an option, who powered in and headed past a motionless Anthony Patterson. Luton had their second goal and an aggregate lead; it said everything about their spirit, steel and execution that they never looked like relinquishing it.

With David Pleat and Mick Harford, now their chief recruitment officer, looking on they produced a night's work to sit with the glory years of the 1980s. In losing narrowly at the Stadium of Light they had not fully exploited Sunderland's aerial weakness, which was the result of a lengthy defensive injury list, but the lesson was heeded. From the opening whistle they hurled into challenges, pressed ferociously and, backed by a quite extraordinary din, asked questions of a makeshift back line. Crosses were flung in constantly; while Tony Mowbray's visitors were technical and nimble, Luton overhauled them by bringing the chaos.

It took only 10 minutes for their intensity to pay off. The award of a corner brought portentous roars and, when it was swung in by Jordan Clark, a Lockyer header was blocked. Gabe Osho swooped to stab in the loose ball. By levelling the tie so quickly, Luton had the grip they craved.

Lockyer's clincher came at the end of a whirlwind that Sunderland, craving the break, appeared to have seen off. Every delivery from the flanks caused discomfort, Patterson flapping at a Doughty cross and requiring a combination of Luke O'Nien and Trai Hume to clear off the line from Carlton Morris. Soon afterwards Morris forced Patterson into a spectacular save, Lockyer subsequently heading wide, and the striker was unfortunate a third time when flashing Adebayo's centre just wide.

"I thought we were exceptional, it was everything we want to be," Edwards said. "We had the better chances, way more pressure, the lads worked their socks off."

That continued in the second half, Luton spending it on the front foot when many would have been cowed into dropping deeper. Clark should have punished another Patterson error and the stadium's foundations shook from the roar when Cody Drameh, their right wing-back, chased the length of the field to win a corner from Jack Clarke. Prompted by the ubiquitous Pelly-Ruddock Mpanzu and urged forward from the side, Luton were utterly relentless.

A swamped Sunderland had no answer but could reflect on the moment, straight after Osho's opener, when Ethan Horvath repelled Pierre Ekwah's near-post flick. When Ekwah drilled the rebound back across, they screamed for a handball by Amari'i Bell but nothing was given and VAR was not present. Amad Diallo tried to get them going but a stretched squad ran out of the steam needed for successive promotions. "We couldn't really get them off our backs," Mowbray said. "I'm proud of the team, how well they've done."

For Edwards, that feeling was multiplied several times over. He was sacked by Luton's bitter rivals Watford in September and, taking over two months later, has emphatically shown his worth. "This group of players is special," he said.

"We're one game away from the Premier League. It sounds surreal saying it, but it's a fact." Luton have every right to believe.

Luton
3-5-2
Horvath; Osho, Lockyer, Bell; Drameh, Mpanzu●, Nakamba, Clark● (Campbell 83),Doughty; Morris, Adebayo
Subs not used Shea, Potts, Berry, Burke, Onyedinma, Taylor

Sunderland
3-4-2-1
Patterson; Hume, O'Nien●, Gooch (Huggins 77); Roberts, Neil (Ba 78), Ekwah, Clarke; Diallo, Pritchard (Alese 57); Gelhardt (Michut 64)
Subs not used Bass, Lihadji, Anderson

Referee Simon Hooper **Attendance** 10,013

Uefa Champions League *Semi-final second leg*

Martínez lands deadly blow and guides Inter into final

Internazionale	**1**
Martínez 74	
Milan	**0**

Internazionale win 3-0 on agg.

Jonathan Liew
San Siro

For Internazionale, the road to Istanbul was paved with bad intentions. The exuberance and colour of their first-leg victory gave way to something darker and grittier here: not so much a semi-final as a turf war, the sort of game that is to be endured rather than enjoyed. Here their great city rivals were snuffed out, dismantled piece by piece, and finally picked off via a goal by Lautaro Martínez. Milan is theirs. But the greatest prize of all remains tantalisingly within reach.

Simone Inzaghi's side will probably go into the final on 3 June as one of the least fancied Champions League contenders in recent history. And from the English perspective there is perhaps a tendency to gaze upon this wrought and wizened squad, with the 37-year-old Edin Dzeko up front and the 35-year-old Francesco Acerbi in the centre of defence, and wonder just how they got this far. But there is also a kind of deadly honesty to them: men of conviction, men of skill and steel, who over 180 minutes simply stood taller and made the braver decisions.

Dzeko was magnificent again: a colossal and utterly disruptive presence who seemed to run long periods of this game with his backside alone. So too Acerbi, a Milan native (and former Milan player) who has beaten bereavement, depression, alcoholism and testicular cancer to reach this point, and for whom this dominant and fearless performance helped to seal the most personal of triumphs. So too Martínez, now just a game away from winning the World Cup and Champions League in the space of six months.

And so to Milan, a crashing disappointment who from the very first whistle last Wednesday never really looked like adding to their seven European Cups. Here again they were painfully lacking in pace and imagination, a team with 57% possession but just one shot in the second half, a team who offered only lethargy where urgency was required, a squad too thin and too inexperienced to challenge in two competitions.

On the touchline Stefano Pioli, dressed immaculately in a suit and trainers like a man intending to run home from work, raged at the unfairness of it all. This has been a dispiriting campaign for Milan, their Serie A title defence crumbling after the winter break and now even the top four looking like a faint hope. This represented Pioli's last chance of salvaging something from the season. Now there will be an increasing chorus wondering whether Pioli is part of the solution or part of the problem.

▼ *Internazionale's Lautaro Martínez fires home in the 74th minute to put the tie beyond Milan*
MARCO LUZZANI/GETTY IMAGES



They arrived in hope, buoyed by the return of Rafael Leão on the left wing, suited up for an Inter rearguard. But as the game went on the lack of poise in their build-up was painfully evident, the one-dimensional Olivier Giroud exposed and isolated. Leão had one decent sight of goal all night, a shot dragged wide. Brahim Díaz scuffed a wonderful opening in the first half, and in hindsight that was probably Milan's best chance of shifting the feel of the tie.

And when Inter got the ball, the field seemed to open out for them in the way it did not for their opponents. They were unchanged, but within that supple, ductile 3-5-2 system they can vary so much. Nicolo Barella played a more aggressive role than he had in the first leg, making late runs into the box, trying to latch onto the second balls from Martínez and Dzeko. Dzeko enjoyed Inter's best chance of the half, flicking on a free-kick and forcing the supreme Mike Maignan to scrabble the ball away.

The game turned a little scrappy in the second half, dead ends begetting dead ends, wrestles begetting wrestles. Dzeko's backside was still running the show, at least until Inzaghi decided to substitute it for Romelu Lukaku's backside. The Curva Nord beat out a frightening tribal rhythm. It felt like a countdown.

Finally, with 15 minutes remaining, the bomb went off. Inter won the ball too easily on the left, worked it into the area virtually unchallenged, Lukaku and Martínez and Robin Gosens all exchanging it. Finally it came to Martínez, who jammed the ball in at the near post before running over to the advertising hoardings and standing atop them like a god on a pedestal. For the first time Inter could breathe, a gasp of air that felt as fresh and life-affirming as the very first.

Will Pep Guardiola or Carlo Ancelotti endure any sleepless nights? Probably not. But then this is a club that has always done its best work in the shadow of doubt, that is most dangerous at the moment when you dare to write it off. Internazionale are not the world's greatest football team, but they know who they are. As the flags waved triumphantly, a banner in the Curva Nord toasted *gli amici che non di son piu*: friends who are no longer with us. By contrast, it feels like one of the European Cup's oldest friends has risen from its slab.

Internazionale
3-5-2
Onana; Darmian, Acerbi, Bastoni; Dumfries, Barella● (Gagliardini 84), Calhanoglu, Mkhitaryan (Brozovic 44), Dimarco (Gosens 66); Martínez● (Correa 84), Dzeko (Lukaku 66)

Milan
4-2-3-1
Maignan; Calabria, Thiaw● (Kalulu 64), Tomori●, Hernández; Krunic●, Tonali●; Messias (Saelemaekers 76), Díaz (Origi 76), Leão; Giroud

Referee Clément Turpin (Fr)

Results

Football

UEFA CHAMPIONS LEAGUE
Semi-finals: Second leg

Internazionale	(0) **1**	**Milan**	(0) **0**
Martínez 74		*(agg 3-0)*	

SKY BET CHAMPIONSHIP PLAYOFFS
Semi-finals: Second leg

Luton	(2) **2**	**Sunderland**	(0) **0**
Osho 10 Lockyer 43		*(agg 3-2)*	

CINCH SCOTTISH LEAGUE ONE PLAYOFFS
Final: First leg

Annan Athletic	(1) **3**	**Clyde**	(1) **1**
Kilsby 18 67, Sula 82og		Cameron 33	

EREDIVISIE
Groningen 2 Ajax 3

Cricket

INDIAN PREMIER LEAGUE
Lucknow Lucknow 177-3 (MP Stoinis 89no, KH Pandya 49no). Mumbai 172-5 (IPKP Kishan 59, RG Sharma 37). Lucknow beat Mumbai by five runs.

Tennis

ATP/WTA INTERNAZIONALI BNL B'ITALIA (Rome)
Men: Fourth round: N Djokovic (Ser) bt C Norrie (GB) 6-3 6-4; **H Rune** (Den) bt A Popyrin (Aus) 6-4 5-7 6-4; **C Ruud** (Nor) bt L Dere (Ser) 6-1 6-3; **F Cerúndolo** (Arg) bt J Sinner (It) 6-7 (3-7) 6-2 6-2; **Y Hanfmann** (Ger) bt A Rublev (Rus) 7-6 (7-5) 4-6 6-3; **D Medvedev** (Rus) bt A Zverev (Ger) 6-2 7-6 (7-2); **B Coric** (Cro) bt F Marozsan (Hun) 3-6 6-4 6-3. **Women: Fourth round: I Swiatek** (Pol) bt D Vekic (Cro) 6-3 6-4; **P Badosa** (Sp) bt K Muchova (Cz) 6-4 6-7 (4-7) 6-2; **Quarter-finals: V Kudermetova** (Rus) bt Zheng Q (Chn) 3-6 6-3 6-4; **A Kalinina** (Ukr) bt B Haddad Maia (Br) 6-7 (2-7) 7-6 (8-6) 6-3.

Cycling

GIRO D'ITALIA
Stage 10 (Scandiano - Viareggio (196km) **1** M Cort (Den) Education-Easypost 4hr 51min 15sec; **2** D Gee (Can) Premier Tech s/t; **3** A De Marchi (It) Jayco-Alula +0:02; **4** M Pedersen (Den) Trek-Segafredo +0:51; **5** P Ackermann (Ger) Emirates; **6** S Oldani (It) Alpecin-Seceuninck; **7** J Milan (It) Bahrain; **8** M Cavendish (GB) Astana Qazaqstan; **9** M Maestri (It) Eolo-Kometa; **10** F Fiorelli (It) Bardiani CSF-Faizane all s/t. **General classification: 1** G Thomas (GB) Ineos Grenadiers 39hr 26min 33sec; **2** P Roglic (Svn) Jumbo-Visma +0:02; **3** T Geoghegan Hart (GB) Ineos Grenadiers +0:05; **4** J Almeida (Por) Emirates +0:22; **5** A Leknessund (Nor) DSM +0:35; **6** D Caruso (It) Bahrain +1:28; **7** L Kamna (Ger) Bora-Hansgrohe +1:52; **8** P Sivakov (Fr) Ineos Grenadiers +2:15; **9** E Dunbar (Ire) Jayco-Alula +2:32; **10** T Arensman (Neth) Ineos Grenadiers s/t.

Ice hockey

NHL PLAYOFFS
Western Conference: Semi-finals
Dallas 2 Seattle 1 (Dallas win series 4-3)

Fixtures

Football
Uefa Champions League
Semi-final: Second leg Man City (1) v Real Madrid (1) (8pm)
Sky Bet Championship playoffs
Semi-finals: Second leg
Middlesbrough (0) Coventry (0) (7pm)
Barclays Women's Super League
Everton v Arsenal (6.15pm); West Ham v Chelsea (8.15pm)
Cinch Scottish Championship playoffs
Final: First leg Airdrionians v Hamilton (7.35pm)

Greg Wood's racing tips

Worcester **1.40** Who Is That **2.15** Wick Green **2.50** Ted's Gift **3.25** Almazhar Garde **4.00** Trolley Boy **4.35** Extraordinary Man **5.05** Harry Gulliver **5.35** Hillsin
York **1.50** La Yakel (nb) **2.25** Lucky Man (nap) **3.00** The Astrologist **3.35** Gather Ye Rosebuds **4.10** Ramazan **4.45** Mashadi **5.15** Val Bassett
Newton Abbot **2.05** Inferno Sacree **2.35** Oakley Dancer **3.10** Doctor Foley **3.45** Begin The Luck **4.20** Danton **4.55** Crypto **5.30** Our Nel
Bath **5.10** Symbol Of Hope **5.40** Haatem **6.10** Wedgewood **6.40** Damascus Steel **7.10** Further Measure **7.40** Mc'Ted **8.10** Pink Lily **8.45** War Chant
Perth **6.00** Banjaxed **6.30** Fostered Phil **7.00** Ginger Pointe **7.30** Rae Des Champs **8.00** Cardboard Gangster **8.30** Steely Addition **9.00** Sanosuke

City's winning machine face monumental moment on their road to history

The ridiculous has been normalised but tonight Pep Guardiola's treble dream faces its toughest test yet

David Hytner

Even by the standards of Pep Guardiola at Manchester City, it was a stunning display of strength. There were a few of them here at the club's training ground yesterday as the manager looked ahead to the second leg of the Champions League semi-final against Real Madrid tonight - one of the most monumental occasions in City's history.

As he had done before the first leg at the Bernabéu last Tuesday, which finished 1-1, Guardiola had no problem in admitting his bosses - the top brass from Abu Dhabi - craved a first Champions League success. It has been a subtle change of tone and his articulation of it seems to come from a place of confidence.

Pre-match tension? You did not feel it in Guardiola, despite a bit of his usual fidgeting. He was a snapshot in easy cool, self-awareness, too. "I'm not overthinking it, don't worry guys," he said with a smile.

Guardiola wants his team to play what is in front of them, to be themselves, not to fret about what has happened in the past, the agonising knockout-phase losses. Hence the line about his legacy being "exceptional already". Guardiola blew out his cheeks. "At home, we feel … wow," he said. "Full of belief."

But if we needed action to go with the words, then the guy who occupied the press conference stage before him had a story to tell; an illuminating one. Kyle Walker was trucking along nicely until the home win against Newcastle on 4 March, after which he went out and about in town and everything unravelled.

Walker's shame has been well documented; the story about the CCTV footage that appeared to show him exposing himself in a bar, the subsequent out-of-court disposal - the way police resolve a low-level crime where the offender is known and has admitted to the offence.

Guardiola cold-shouldered Walker until the middle of April, starting him once in six games - the FA Cup tie against Burnley. He left him as an unused substitute in the biggest matches during the run - the Champions League last-16 second leg against RB Leipzig, the league match with Liverpool and the quarter-final first leg against Bayern Munich.

Was Guardiola punishing Walker for his off-field behaviour? He has not said. But what he did say on 8 April might have been more wounding. Guardiola had preferred to play a centre-half out of position over Walker at right-back, mainly John Stones, asking him to step up and across into midfield. He explained that it was because Walker lacked the tactical intelligence to do so, the "educated movements". Ouch.

Guardiola had already moved on one full-back - João Cancelo to Bayern in January - albeit he tended to use him on the left. Now he discarded undisputedly England's No 1 right-back, whom he had counted on for years. Does any other club manager in Europe have the range of options to act like this? Or the chutzpah?

It looked over for Walker at City. The team, though, continued to win. This is the machine into which Madrid have run, the one eyeing more than Champions League glory. City are on for the treble and it has come to feel as if everybody expects them to complete it. They are normalising the ridiculous.

> ***Guardiola wants his team to play what is in front of them, not to fret about the past***

Even better for Guardiola has been Walker's form after regaining his place. He has barely missed a beat and was exceptional - to borrow his manager's description - in the first leg against Madrid; against the danger man, Vinícius Júnior. It is the duel that could shape the return.

Everyone seemingly has emerged from the episode in better shape: Guardiola, Walker, City as a collective. They are ready for the defining moments.

"Sometimes, certain opinions in football … you don't always agree with," Walker said. "Did it hurt? Of course it did. I can't sit here and lie to you and say it didn't hurt. You start to doubt yourself but you have to go back to basics … to prove him wrong and that is what I have done."

Walker v Vinícius has been built up in a similar way to Walker v Kylian Mbappé before the World Cup quarter-final between England and France last December. England lost but Walker conceded nothing in the duel. At the age of 32, he has lost none of his pace and he revealed he had been clocked "the other day by one of the lads in sports science" at 37.5km/h.



Guardiola feels his team must be better than they were in the first leg; they need to be more creative, get balls into Erling Haaland, show greater cohesion. But he will demand more of the same from Walker, whose embrace with Vinícius after the game was one of the abiding images.

"I went to hug him because he tried to rainbow flick me, so it was kind of like: 'Please don't try that again - I don't want to be a meme,'" Walker said. "Boxers fight and then they shake hands after. That is the level of respect I have for him. I will give him the respect [after the final whistle] but before then it is dog eat dog."

Walker talked about how City had grown from the Champions League exits of the past, mentioning the heartbreaker against Tottenham in 2019. He also said that the team had walked a fine line in the league this season; one more bad result after the draw at Nottingham Forest on 18 February and it "could have been all over". Instead, they have won 11 games in a row, a fifth title in six years now a formality.

"We seem to kick on at the business end," Walker said. "We were having a joke with Ilkay Gündogan yesterday - he turns into prime Zidane in the last couple of months. These players are born winners." They just have to show it against Madrid.



Back in the big match routine

Kyle Walker leads from the front as the Manchester City players complete their preparations for Real Madrid tonight
TOM JENKINS/THE GUARDIAN

Manchester City

Real Madrid

Today 8pm **First leg: 1-1**

● Manchester City	● Real Madrid
Probable: 4-2-3-1	**Probable: 4-3-3**
Ederson; Walker, Stones, Dias, Akanji; Rodri, Gündogan; Silva, De Bruyne, Grealish; Haaland	Courtois; Carvajal, Militão, Rüdiger, Alaba; Modric, Kroos, Camavinga; Valverde, Benzema, Vinícius
Subs from	**Subs from**
Carson, Ortega, Lewis, Laporte, Gómez, Foden, Mahrez, Álvarez, Perrone, Palmer	Lunin, López, Vallejo, Nacho, Odriozola, Mendy, Vázquez, Tchouaméni, Ceballos, Hazard, Díaz, Asensio, Rodrygo
Doubtful	**Doubtful**
None	Camavinga
Injured	**Injured**
Aké	None

(probable teams)

Venue Etihad Stadium
Referee Szymon Marciniak (Pol) 14°

TV BT Sport 1 **Radio** BBC 5 Live



Eduardo Camavinga first played at full-back at the Qatar World Cup

Real rewarded by Camavinga conversion

Frenchman's switch from midfield was stroke of luck, but he may turn out to be the complete package at full-back

Philippe Auclair

It wasn't the first time that necessity proved the mother of invention, and it won't be the last that what was meant to be a stopgap turned into more than a stroke of luck - and, in a not so distant future, may even be seen as a stroke of genius.

Had Lucas Hernandez not been injured in France's first game at the 2022 World Cup, Eduardo Camavinga would not have played at left-back for *Les Bleus* against Tunisia and Argentina later in the tournament.

Similarly, had Ferland Mendy and David Alaba not been unavailable for a Real Madrid La Liga fixture against Real Sociedad in late January of this year, it is unlikely Carlo Ancelotti would have imitated Didier Deschamps and deployed his 20-year-old midfielder in a position Camavinga knew very little about until six months ago - a position in which he gave such a brilliant display in the first leg of Real's semi-final against Manchester City that a *madridista* paper gave him 10 out of 10 in its ratings, regardless of the misdirected pass which led to Kevin De Bruyne's equaliser.

No one would have predicted this back in November. Deschamps's decision had taken everybody by surprise at home. He had tested his young player at left-back in a warm-up friendly against the Qatari side Al-Gharafa and been pleased enough to field him there again when France, already qualified for the last 16, met Tunisia in their final group game. It was not a resounding success. Tunisia won 1-0 and Deschamps was fiercely criticised for his choice. The former Marseille coach Rolland Courbis thundered on national radio: "Camavinga left-back? Why not the physio?" It was one thing to deploy Antoine Griezmann as a deep-lying *regista*, quite another to ask a youngster with four caps, all as a central midfielder, to try a new role in the biggest of all tournaments. Yet it is on the left of defence that Camavinga played, and very well, the last 49 minutes of an epic final.

One of the most striking features of Camavinga's reinvention is that the two managers who engineered it are not thinkers in the Pep Guardiola mould. Both learned and perfected their trade in Serie A, a league which, during their time there could be associated with tactical refinement and a quasi-scientific approach but not with experimentation for the sake of it. Both are pragmatists, superb readers of the flow of a game, exceptional leaders of men. They have knowhow, experience and principles, but neither could be considered "system coaches".

Camavinga's transformation was not informed by an urge to try the untried, but by the gradual realisation that this young footballer possessed qualities which could blossom into something very special if put to good use in a different context. Counterintuitive as the process may have seemed from the outside, it was no less organic for that. The square peg was not forced in the round hole; it now feels like a natural fit, an "invention" in the original sense, that is: a find.

Tonight's game will be only the 20th in which Camavinga operates from the left of defence, yet what we've seen of him there suggests that he may - just may - set a template for a new understanding of what this role could be.

We've had plenty of marauding full-backs who could turn into auxiliary wingers, from Giacinto Fachetti to Manuel Amoros to Cafu in the past to Andy Robertson and Trent Alexander-Arnold today. Thanks, in particular, to Guardiola and his former assistant Mikel Arteta, we also have had a number of full-backs who can "tuck in" and bring numerical superiority in midfield, such as Philipp Lahm, David Alaba, João Cancelo, John Stones and Oleksandr Zinchenko. What we have not had until now - until Camavinga - is a full-back who could combine both these dimensions in a single, thrilling package, one whose influence could, just as much as Vinícius Júnior's or De Bruyne's brilliance, determine the fate of this semi-final.

There is always the temptation, when speaking of so young a footballer, to rein in expectations for fear of harming the development of a prodigious talent. It should be resisted. Camavinga has the athleticism and stamina required of the most physically demanding role in modern football. He has the touch, raw pace and dribbling ability of a winger. Most importantly, he has the intelligence, passing range and vision which astonished onlookers when, aged 16, he masterminded a shock 2-1 win for Rennes over Paris Saint-Germain in 2019.

Players blessed with such a profusion of gifts are not usually found at left-back. But then, Eduardo Camavinga isn't your usual kind of left-back.

Sheikh Jassim makes £5.5bn offer for United

Jamie Jackson

Sheikh Jassim bin Hamad al-Thani has made a dramatic fourth bid for Manchester United, with an improved offer of no more than £5.5bn which includes the clearance of the £1bn debt and a fund solely for the club and surrounding community.

More than two weeks have passed since Sheikh Jassim and Sir Jim Ratcliffe, the Ineos owner, each submitted what were supposedly final bids for United. The Qatari banker's offer then was close to £5bn for 100%, while Ratcliffe's was thought to be for a stake of a little over 50%, leaving Avram and Joel Glazer, two of the siblings who collectively own a majority share, with a 20% stake.

But the Guardian understands that Sheikh Jassim's intent on becoming United's next owner moved him to increase his price by around £500m while clearing the debt and creating a fund solely for the club and surrounding community as he seeks to become the Glazers' preferred bidder. The family originally valued the club at £6bn when it went on the market.

Whether Ratcliffe, one of Britain's richest people and also owns French club Nice, will respond is unclear. However, a third option may be that one or more of the Glazers retain their stake and take investment into the club, with the US firms Elliott Investment Management and the Carlyle Group interested in doing so.

The Raine Group is orchestrating the sale for the Glazers.

Football In brief

Arsenal

Captain Xhaka set to depart for Leverkusen

Granit Xhaka is poised to leave Arsenal at the end of the season and Bayer Leverkusen are in advanced talks to sign the midfielder for £13m. The 30-year-old's contract expires in June 2024 and there are no negotiations over an extension, with a parting of ways planned seven years after Xhaka joined from another German club, Borussia Mönchengladbach. The Switzerland international is close to an agreement over personal terms with Leverkusen on a four-year deal. Arsenal striker Folarin Balogun has switched allegiance from England to the 2026 World Cup co-hosts USA. The New York-born 21-year-old, who is on loan at the French club Reims, has represented England at under-21 level. **Fabrizio Romano**

Chelsea Women

Frankfurt's Nüsken signs three-year deal

Chelsea have announced the signing of the Germany midfielder Sjoeke Nüsken, who will join from Eintracht Frankfurt on 1 July. The 22-year-old, who has signed a three-year deal, can also play at centre-half. "Sjoeke is a fantastic young midfield player. She's dynamic, good aerially, and is going to be a fantastic signing for this club," the Chelsea manager, Emma Hayes, said. **Guardian sport**

Uruguay

Bielsa appointed coach until 2026 World Cup

Marcelo Bielsa has been named the new coach of Uruguay, signing a contract until 2026. The Argentinian takes over following the exit of Diego Alonso, after Uruguay failed to reach the World Cup knockout stages. "The fans are calling for games and emotions. The time has come," read a message on the team's official Twitter account, which also confirmed the appointment. Bielsa, who is expected to be presented at a press conference today, is back in work after his departure from Leeds in February 2022 and previously coached Argentina and Chile. **Reuters**



Folarin Balogun has represented England at under-21 level

11th hour bid
Qatar's Sheikh Jassim makes improved offer for United

Page 41 →



Donald McRae
Dark shadow lurks over Katie Taylor's Dublin homecoming

Page 36 →



The Guardian
Wednesday
17 May
2023

Sport

'I'm not overthinking'
Guardiola keeps his City plan under wraps for Madrid duel

Jamie Jackson

Pep Guardiola has promised he will not overthink Manchester City's Champions League semi-final second leg against Real Madrid tonight. The manager said his legacy is exceptional and will not be defined by whether he wins the competition with the club.

The tie is poised at 1-1 after the opening leg at the Santiago Bernabéu last week. Guardiola has been viewed as causing City's defeat in previous editions of the Champions League by overcomplicating selection and tactics. The most prominent example was the 1-0 defeat against Chelsea in the 2021 final when he dropped Rodri and João Cancelo, did not play a regular holding player and reinstated the out-of-favour Raheem Sterling.


Pep Guardiola says his legacy is exceptional, as City attempt to seal the treble

Guardiola believes City have to perform better than they did against Real in Spain but he was reluctant to reveal how he will accomplish this. "Hopefully you can see tomorrow," he said. "Nothing special. I'm not overthinking, don't worry guys, nothing different to what we've done, just more fluid and play a bit better. The emotion is there and has to be high, but just this won't beat a team like Madrid. We have to adjust something, do it a little better to create chances for our strikers and people up front to get more balls, transitions, the quality they have in all departments."

In six previous attempts Guardiola has failed to lead City to the trophy, though his tenure is supremely successful. The champions require a maximum of one Premier League win for a hat-trick of titles and remain on course for the treble. Guardiola referred to his record when asked whether the Champions League was needed to firm up his legacy.

"The legacy is that we've had [one hell of a time] here and for many years they will remember a generation of players who for five or six years scored lots of goals and won very well and people should remember that," he said. "Whether or not they will remember us or not I don't know, but we have had a good time."

Archer out of Ashes as Bairstow takes the gloves

Simon Burnton

Jofra Archer will miss a second successive Ashes series after scans revealed a recurrence of a stress fracture to his right elbow. The England and Wales Cricket Board confirmed the news when announcing the squad for next month's one-off Test against Ireland, for which Jonny Bairstow returns after recovering from a triple leg break and will take the wicket-keeping gloves from Ben Foakes.

Rob Key, the ECB's managing director for men's cricket, said Archer was "pretty distraught" about his latest setback, which was confirmed after the bowler's premature return from the IPL last week. It is the third time the 28-year-old has suffered the injury.

Key said he had "no concerns at the moment" about Ben Stokes's fitness for the Ireland Test, which starts at Lord's on 1 June, noting that while England's captain has been at the IPL he has been so infrequently involved that "he's actually been getting more rest than he would have done had he been doing anything else".

Bairstow will keep wicket and bat at seven, returning as a straight replacement for Foakes, a decision the selection committee "agonised over for quite some time".

Ollie Pope has been named as vice-captain. The announcement reflects the player's growing status within the group, but the timing also seems notable given that the state of Stokes's left knee increases the chances of him being forced from the field during two intense months of Test cricket.

Jimmy Anderson is named despite the minor groin strain he suffered last week with the bowling ranks including Chris Woakes, who missed most of last summer with a knee injury, and Mark Wood, who is on paternity leave.

Ali Martin *Page 38 →*


▲ *England's Jofra Archer will miss his second successive Ashes*



MIKE HEWITT/GETTY IMAGES

Inter settle local score to reach final

Inter	Milan
1	0

Inter win 3-0 on aggregate

Lautaro Martínez celebrates his goal as Internazionale eased past Milan at San Siro last night
Match report *Page 39* →



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Writer, art director and illustrator Michael Roberts *Obituaries, page 6*

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The Guardian Wednesday 17 May 2023

Journal

Opinion and ideas



Rishi Sunak and Suella Braverman in the Commons last Wednesday
PHOTOGRAPH: JESSICA TAYLOR/ UK PARLIAMENT/AFP/ GETTY IMAGES

Tory fanatics march on – and they have Sunak in their sights

Rafael Behr



Conservative leaders fail in one of two ways. Either they resist the demands of their most fanatical MPs or they don't. Ignoring the zealots provokes rebellion, making the party unmanageable. Indulging them leads to policies that are unworkable. Rishi Sunak is combining both mistakes. The prime minister is giving the right of his party most of what it wants, which is not enough. Everything would not be enough.

Britain has left the European Union on terms more drastic than anything promised by the leave campaign, but the demand for separation is unsatisfied. Euroscepticism is an itch that spreads faster than every effort to scratch it.

And so Sunak flies to Reykjavík this week for a summit of the Council of Europe to explain to the president of the European court of human rights (not an EU institution) why the rules must be changed so that Britain can deport refugees to Rwanda.

The Brexit promise was that control of the border would be taken back. From whom? Bureaucrats in Brussels first. Still the frontier is porous. Attention turns to judges in Strasbourg, whose overreaching fingers must be peeled off national sovereignty. But meddlesome foreigners never act alone. The quest for control inevitably turns inward. It becomes a pursuit of fifth columnists and a cleansing of unsound minds in the culture. The trajectory is intrinsic to a doctrine that the Tory right embraced before daring to name it: nationalism.

Many Eurosceptics are still squeamish about the label. Some recognise the brand limitations of a word that comes historically associated with autocracy and war. Others insist that Brexit is a project for the advancement of free trade and therefore liberal, from a certain angle.

In that view, the pattern of xenophobic rhetoric is a figment of the hysterical remainer imagination.

The pretence got harder to sustain this week. Leading figures on the Tory right have mustered for a National Conservatism jamboree. They swapped laments about falling birthrates, subjugation by globalised elites and the demoralisation of youth by godlessness and Marxism.

The home secretary, Suella Braverman, rehearsed her next bid for the Tory leadership, complaining about the unchecked advance of multiculturalism and calling

2

Tory fanatics march on – and they have Sunak in their sights

Rafael Behr

← *Continued from front*

for British workers to fill vacancies where migrant workers are in short supply.

That is a swerve away from government policy, which is quietly more permissive of legal immigration, by way of work visas, while noisily hostile to anyone who turns up uninvited. Jeremy Hunt, the chancellor, understands that a tight labour market is constraining economic growth. So does Sunak, but he won't say it aloud.

The text of Braverman's speech was cleared by Downing Street. That doesn't mean it was welcome. But nor should it be assumed that Sunak stifles liberal qualms when issuing licences to bang the hard-right drum. The prime minister is a social conservative by conviction, much more so than his recent predecessors.

Liz Truss was a libertarian in all things. She thought government should stay out of people's private moral choices as well as their bank accounts. Boris Johnson shared that inclination, to the extent that he believed in anything beyond his own ambition.

But Johnson also had an interventionist streak that verged on egalitarian when it came to levelling up. Or at least he understood that former Labour voters who had supported him on Brexit wanted tangible payback in public investment, even if he didn't admit that higher spending meant that either taxes or borrowing must rise.

Sunak's economics are more typically Thatcherite. He hung an icon of Nigel Lawson in his office at the Treasury. The pandemic forced him to override those instincts, subsidising the nation's wages through lockdowns, but bowing to expediency in a crisis didn't dent the underlying faith.

Likewise, the prime minister's refusal to cut taxes is not, as some of his Tory critics allege, symptomatic of some socialist mind virus contracted in the Treasury. It is orthodox fiscal conservatism, given a disciplinarian edge by last year's market backlash against Truss's wild adventures in budget incontinence.

For Conservatives to be led by such a prime minister, one so pious in adherence to the tenets of their creed, yet still feel betrayed goes beyond ideological monomania. It is a kind of childish ingratitude, mixed with weariness at the dull burden of grown-up government.

That is why a hardcore still hankers for Johnson. They praise his unique electioneering talent, forgetting his ignominious downfall, because the "Boris" show was a delightful deferral of hard choices. They can't muster any affection for Sunak, for the same reason that an alcoholic can't like the hangover as much as the binge.

But sobriety in style is not the same as moderation of belief. Downing Street is now better organised, under a prime minister who pays attention to detail and sustains strategic focus. There are plans that don't change from one hour to the next.

Whitehall officials are grateful for the restoration of functional administration, but the underlying tension between ideological obsession and practical government has not gone away. Where Johnson would bluff and bluster, Sunak prefers tactical discretion.

Last week's U-turn on a December deadline for the automatic vaporisation of retained EU law is a case in point. Erasing thousands of statutes without knowing what purpose they serve is an obviously reckless, stupid idea. He was all for it during last summer's leadership contest.

What the prime minister believes these days is hard to discern. He indulges his party's most fanatical tendencies without full-throated endorsement. In return he is tolerated as a caretaker, not trusted as a believer.

He is not blind to the practical limitations of Brexit ideology, but nor he does he see beyond them. He has not picked a side between reality and dogma, but stands awkwardly between them, in the churned-up bog of a political no man's land, sinking.

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Economics

Labour needs more creative solutions to the cost of living crisis

The sharp fall in disposable income among UK households has been blamed on the war in Ukraine, supply chain problems and Conservative policies. It is a product of all these things. But it is also a symptom of a longer decline in living standards that predates them. In response, both the Conservatives and Labour have proposed variations on the same programme of growth and jobs. Yet what if this emphasis is neglecting another essential area: the everyday goods and services that we all depend upon?

This is the argument advanced by academics in a new book, When Nothing Works. Living standards aren't just determined by income or wage growth – they also depend upon people's access to essential infrastructure and services, such as housing, transport and energy. Rather than ensuring that these goods are available and affordable to everyone, the government has instead fixated on work as the main route for lifting people out of poverty. Its punitive benefits system has pushed more people into low-paid work but has not protected them from falling below the minimum needed to survive. Meanwhile, because many essential services have been outsourced to the market, their costs have escalated – and households are struggling.

Nowhere is this clearer than in the dysfunctional rental market. Government spending on housing benefit has risen by around 40% since the mid-1990s, yet this has not prevented people from falling into poverty. So long as landlords continue to drive up rents and social housing remains scarce, private renters will be playing catch-up, and the government will either have to accept an ever-increasing housing benefit bill or leave people exposed to high housing costs. It has opted for the latter, freezing local housing allowance in England. In the UK, the housing overburden rate for low-income private tenants – the percentage of them who spend more than 40% of their income on rent – is 53%, more than three times the rate in Germany. High housing costs deepen poverty. In Scotland, for example, where housing is relatively affordable, rates of child poverty are lower.

An easy way to protect people from these costs would be unfreezing local housing allowance. But a future Labour government should go further. A better solution to the cost of living crisis would be providing universal access to the services and goods that form the bedrock of prosperity. This would mean building more social housing and curbing soaring rents with reforms such as rent controls. In other areas of life, it could mean making nutritious food cheaper by subsidising it, giving children free school meals, or providing free internet access.

In 2018, Rachel Reeves wrote a pamphlet calling for a focus on the "everyday economy" – the services and social goods that sustain our daily lives. Five years is a long time in politics. Although Labour has made gestures towards transformative reforms, such as its pledges to create a national energy company and support a community right to buy, its economic agenda is framed overwhelmingly in the conventional language of growth. The shadow cabinet seems reluctant to focus on questions of economic power, lest these be interpreted as a Corbyn-era hangover. But there are many examples of progressive experiments that it could learn from within its own party, such as Sadiq Khan's free school meals policy in London or Paul Dennett's municipal housing company supplying affordable homes for rent in Salford. The challenge for Labour should lie in scaling these up.

South-east Asia

Thailand's opposition have triumphed at the polls, but voters still may not prevail

Careful what you wish for. The Thai royalist-military establishment has spent years attempting to suppress the political forces that swelled around the billionaire businessman Thaksin Shinawatra. Instead of addressing the social roots of his populist appeal to rural Thais and the urban poor, it has used two coups, court cases and ruthless suppression of dissent to see off the tycoon and his proxies. The military has remained in power since removing his sister as prime minister in 2014. Yet in Sunday's election, Pheu Thai, the latest party associated with him, was eclipsed only by a new progressive party demanding military- and monarchy-related reform.

The results are not even a landslide, says one political analyst, but a skyfall. The poll ruptured the division of Thailand into establishment "yellow shirt" and Thaksin "red shirt" supporters. The new Move Forward party took 14m votes and 151 seats by winning over young urbanites who would recoil from the former prime minister, a polarising figure convicted of corruption in absentia and with a dismal human rights record in office. It also picked up some support from Pheu Thai, now fronted by his daughter, which still took 9m votes and 141 seats. Together, the opposition have trounced the political establishment and agreed to form a coalition government.

That does not mean they will be able to do so. Move Forward's predecessor, Future Forward, placed third in 2019's election but was dissolved, with its leader disqualified as an MP. A similar bid is afoot against Move Forward's Pita Limjaroenrat. To become prime minister he needs support from military-appointed senators as well as elected MPs; several of the former have said they will not back him. And if the elite allows Move Forward to proceed, it will be poised to exploit – or foment – crises that can bring down a government.

Thaksin, who has said he will return from self-exile, rose by tapping into deep-rooted grievances about glaring inequalities. Beyond piecemeal subsidies and handouts, the elite has done little to counter his offer. The 2014 coup was a turning point for many younger Thais. If their parents have seen the military as a source of stability, they see it erasing their future through increasingly authoritarian rule and an economic slump. Then came the royal succession in 2016. King Maha Vajiralongkorn lacks the moral authority accorded to his father, and has centralised wealth and power. Use of harsh laws against insulting the monarchy helped to provoke previously unthinkable protests against royal power and privilege.

While the old order tries to drag Thailand back towards a deferential past, voters are looking to the future. They see themselves as citizens, not subjects. Even Pheu Thai's machine politics and materially focused messaging looks old-fashioned to many – and rumours that it might form a pact with a minor military party boosted Move Forward, which has vowed to rein in the military, take on the oligarchs and amend the lese-majesty laws.

As the political scientist Thitinan Pongsudhirak observes, "The more foul play that unfolds, such as military takeovers, party dissolutions and the disqualifications of elected representatives, the likelier it is that street demonstrations return." The old playbook is not working, and the failures are more striking each time. Thaksin was a symptom. The elite's real problem is themselves.



Holly and Phil: a classic cocktail now served on the rocks

Marina Hyde



Holly Willoughby and Phillip Schofield on This Morning on Monday
PHOTOGRAPH: KEN MCKAY/ITV/SHUTTERSTOCK

Phillip Schofield's This Morning career is lying in state on a catafalque, and the queue to view it currently runs to 10 miles. Yet still they come. What a testament to the guy's particular qualities. Then again, when the loathed Hollywood executive Harry Cohn died, back in the 1950s, and 2,000 people attended his funeral, a comedian remarked: "It only proves what they always say - give the public what they want to see and they'll come out for it."

To the snakepit of daytime television, then, with ITV's morning magazine drawing the rubberneckers on Monday, as former bezzies and co-presenters Phil and Holly Willoughby "battled on" despite reports of a serious rift. Schofield has done hilariously mad things over the past week, like hire crisis management and issue a statement about their amazing friendship and professional partnership. Holly … hasn't.

Are they really on the rocks? Yes, would seem to be the obvious answer, with many viewers convinced they could feel the tension on Monday's programme. That said, these daytime shows often have the feel of a hostage video. I can't see how you would possibly be able to act like you believed in segueing from an item warning about Alzheimer's to a chicken traybake recipe unless there was some guy standing just off camera drawing a scimitar menacingly across his throat. But we'll come to show editor Martin Frizell in a minute.

The one thing we can all live without hearing any more about is Holly and Phil's "professionalism" for carrying on. FYI, commentators: most of the country works every day with people they can't stand, so spare us the medal ceremony for a pair who pull in £730,000 each for doing it only four days a week.

As for why Phil and Holly are on the rocks, who can say? Or rather, who can say in print? For now, a recap of only the barest bones of this saga. Despite being watched by an average of about a million viewers, the stewardship of the This Morning sofa is being written about 30 times more feverishly than the stewardship of less important places, like the Foreign Office, and 50 times more feverishly than the fact that a former cabinet minister is now on record saying openly that the Conservatives sought to "gerrymander"

* **Marina Hyde** *joins fellow Guardian columnists at three live events in June, in Leeds, Brighton and London. See the Guardian website for full details*

> **"Most of us work every day with people we can't stand, so spare us the medals for a pair who pull in £730,000 each**

by insisting on voter ID for elections. Yup, This Morning matters - *really* matters - and the fact that a story about Holly and Phil was the most read bit of news on the Guardian website for a large part of Monday can only be a testament to that significance. (Needless to say, I have read every word.)

But the plotlines are byzantine and in some cases still obscure. Take just one knotty strand of it all. Friday's This Morning used to be presented by Eamonn Holmes and his wife Ruth Langsford. Back in December 2019, it was reported that Ruth had made an official complaint about Phil - a stand she was supported in by Phil's former occasional co-host Amanda Holden, who stated: "I admire anyone who sticks up for themselves as it's not an easy thing to do. There is a tin opener and a can somewhere, and other people have found the opener."

Unclear what happened to Ruth's complaint - but when, soon after, Phil suddenly decided to come out as gay, he did so on a This Morning presented by Ruth and Eamonn, who were then shown hugging him and holding his hand. Holly was in supportive attendance. Yet Holmes now seems quite pleased to see the pair under the hammer. Eamonn presents a breakfast show on GB News, and is not remotely bitter - never is, missy, never is - though Monday found him twinkling: "I think there should have been a special award for Phillip Schofield and Holly Willoughby for best actors." Well, now. I don't think we can even begin to get our head round all the angles of that timeline.

Further highly called-for perspective came courtesy of polo-neck-of-shame wearer Dapper Laughs, who on Monday tweeted a photo of himself staring pensively out of a train window with the caption: "Sat thinking about how ITV dropped me over a joke and Schofield's still on there."

And a field day too for my favourite future Royal Society fellow, "body language expert" Judi James, who comes straight off a coronation rentaquote bonanza to parse Monday's This Morning. She declared that one moment "gave Phil the body language advantage in what looked like a bravado fightback, because by the time he turned to Holly her signals of self-diminishing were making her look anxious and sad". God love Judi. I always order the word salad and am never disappointed.

Backstage gossip from the show also tends towards the scenery-chewing, with Frizell reportedly observed forgoing his usual spot in the gallery while the show was on air, to instead sit in the canteen with "a face like thunder". The Boswell of this seems to be former breakfast TV side table Dan Wootton, now a GB News presenter and committed prose stylist, who currently starts a new article about Holly and Phil four minutes after finishing the last one. He ended his MailOnline column on Monday with the thunderous verdict on the latest edition of This Morning: "This felt like the daytime TV equivalent of the last days of Rome."

Mm. Like Dan himself, that line works better as a joke. And, of course, as a passionate student of history, Professor Wootton will know that by some estimates the last days of Rome dragged on for 200 years. Two whole centuries of corruption and catamites and caving to the barbarians at the border. Luckily, ITV doesn't face such grave problems.



Arts funding is broken. Sport's model can fix it

Nicholas Hytner



When I became director of the National Theatre in 2003, government investment was flowing into the arts and the Arts Council had the resources to fund a renaissance in regional theatre. Between 1997 and 2007 arts spending doubled; dance, opera and classical music all flourished.

The optimism and financial security now seem like a distant memory. Today, I don't know a single subsidised arts organisation in the country that feels financially secure. Many freelance artists have given up, battered by the pandemic and the disastrous removal of their right to work freely in the EU.

During the pandemic, the unexpected generosity of the government's £1.6bn Culture Recovery Fund prevented a collapse of the entire sector. But I despair at the bizarre decision to invest heavily in a fund to help the arts outlive Covid, only to starve them of the support they need to return to health.

An admirable commitment to boost spending outside London as part of the levelling-up agenda turned out to be a textbook example of levelling down. In February 2022, the then culture secretary, Nadine Dorries, instructed the Arts Council to take £24m from London and distribute it elsewhere in England: nowhere near enough to transform the picture in the rest of the country, but enough to devastate English National Opera, and many others.

The Arts Council was established to distribute state funding at arm's length without government interference, so you might have expected it to resist the government's assault on its independence. In its latest strategy document, the Arts Council laid out plans for England to be a country "in which the creativity of each of us is valued and given the chance to flourish. A country where every one of us has access to a remarkable range of high-quality cultural experiences."

Nobody could argue with either of these ambitions. The problem is that "the creativity of each of us" must these days be nurtured without the help of schools, from which the arts have been ruthlessly stripped. Even more of the Arts Council's reduced resources must be ploughed into papering over the cracks of an education system that has turned its back on music, drama and the visual arts. And that's even before it addresses the goal of unlimited adult creativity.

This vast remit is in addition to supporting what it coyly calls "high-quality cultural experiences". There isn't enough money to do any of it, so it's no surprise that my colleagues have given up on trying to make their case with the current government and are looking to what will presumably be the next one. In their approach, I hope they will be bold. After 13 years under attack, it's too easy to adopt the cringe of a whipped dog. Even the great conductor Simon Rattle, though he was on the warpath, felt he had to "understand this is a time of belt-tightening".

The total Arts Council England grant is £459m: less than 0.05% of all government spending. Even doubling it would barely dent the national finances. But a significant increase would be transformational out of proportion to the relatively modest sums involved: to the confidence and productivity of artists, the size and enthusiasm of audiences, the wellbeing of communities, our town and city centres and our international reputation.

But funding is only part of the problem. Maybe the way forward is for the arts to use sport as a model. There are two distinct funding bodies for sport. UK Sport has, in its own words, "a very clear remit at the 'top end' of Britain's sporting pathway, with no direct involvement in community or school sport". And it wins us medals. The other, Sport England (which has equivalents in the other home nations) invests in sport and physical activity to make it a normal part of life for everyone. Both functions are vital.

My proposal, then, for a Labour government, is to fund, in addition to the Arts Council, a new body with its own funding stream, to which new community-based initiatives as well as established education and outreach programmes can apply. And to re-establish the arts in schools.

Meanwhile, focus the Arts Council's grant on making the best possible art by professional artists for the most diverse possible audience. There is more than enough talent and enthusiasm to rebuild the creative powerhouse that has been so battered.

*
Nicholas Hytner *is a theatre and film director, and former artistic director of the National Theatre in London*

Letters

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Country diary

Long Dean, Cotswolds

The sight of Irving's trailer creaking backwards into the yard is a familiar one, though we don't associate it with this season. Usually he arrives in November, delivering a boar to put with our saddleback sow. Mind you, the ground conditions today are not dissimilar, this spring mirroring last year's early winter with its unending wet and mud.

Today's delivery is of nine weaners - piglets around eight weeks old - and a mixture of gilts (females) and boars. It's difficult to resist a smile as I peer through the vent on the trailer's side. But the pleasure is bittersweet. Our sow farrowed in March. It was a straightforward evening's work, notwithstanding the fact that she produced 15. She is a gentle creature and tolerant of assistance, but a primitive protectiveness takes over once she has shed the afterbirths, so it is best to give her space. Besides, this was her fourth farrowing and she had proved herself the most diligent of mothers. A few fatalities are inevitable in a large litter, but over the next 24 hours, more came. Why? Everything appeared normal - she was lying with teats exposed, the piglets somnolently latched on.

Then it struck me. A feeding sow will rhythmically grunt, but this time everything was abnormally quiet. Not even the vet's injection of oxytocin, a hormone stimulant, could induce her to let down her milk. With nothing to sustain them, the whole litter perished. It was utterly distressing, the more so for being without explanation.

Often in farming, you are further back than when you started. We have a much-loved sow that we can no longer assume to breed from and we've paid for weaners before we've begun to rear them, with commercial feed prices still high. But these thoughts are banished as nine immaculately clean piglets bundle down the ramp and into the sty. They pause, calm but alert, their snouts busily taking it all in. Then one heads for the open field and the rest skitter after. Hours later, they are still out delightedly digging - at least someone is glad of the mud.

Sarah Laughton



ILLUSTRATION: CLIFFORD HARPER

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Why Labour must heed the clamour for change

A new New Labour? Is that really the limit of Keir Starmer's ambition (Expect Blair-style reforms 'on steroids', says Starmer, 13 May)? And what he said in his speech makes me think he's talking about a new small-c conservative party.

The fact that Britain had a massive financial crisis at the end of 13 years of the Blair/Brown governments shows how little was changed. Almost none of the major stupidities of Thatcher's policies, such as the deregulation of the financial sector which led to that disaster, was changed. They didn't even stop the sale of council houses, so over a third of those sold are now in the hands of private landlords. A wasted decade.

And New Labour's repeal of clause IV simply paved the way for the sell-off of vital resources, so we are now facing disastrous price rises, made even more disgusting by the fact that many of our energy firms, rail providers, water companies and bus services are in the hands of foreign equivalents of our previous nationally owned suppliers. And, as usual, not even a mention of that more recent Tory stupidity: Brexit. I suppose it's a step forward for Starmer to recognise the scale of the disaster facing the country, but pussyfooting words and feeble promises won't even begin to address the changes needed. I despair.

David Reed
London

● Keir Starmer's promises to reform public services lag behind public opinion, and while he hesitates, the public is increasingly desperate for change. His caution is often attributed to "private polling", while in the real world electors who have never supported public ownership call for someone to get a grip on the water industry.

Such anger is driven by long-running failures by water companies that still distribute excess profits to shareholders. Privatised rail franchises are more unpopular than the publicly owned services they replaced. And the energy market is fragile, with public money being used to stabilise prices for consumers and protect companies from collapsing.

Labour knows that it is benefiting from widespread anger at Tory incompetence, so why not be bold in testing the depth of that dissatisfaction by inviting people to support bolder thinking. It's clear that dissenting Tory MPs have confidence in their answers (Grassroots group denies it's 'Johnson revivalist', 13 May), continuing to believe in a Brexit that has predictably underperformed, and determined to reinstate an ex-leader whose boldness was only outstripped by the scale of his lies.

Les Bright
Exeter

● Keir Starmer is right to consider allowing EU citizens to vote in general elections in the UK (Report, 16 May). But this idea should go further. I am a British citizen resident in Spain, and, having lived here for a lot more than 15 years (the limit for voting imposed on a person with no UK address), cannot vote in UK general elections. Nor, post-Brexit, can I vote (except in municipal elections) in Spain.

Starmer could open the debate about how to ensure that people from the UK and EU whose country of residency does not coincide with their citizenship could receive fair representation - for example, by letting them choose where to vote based on nationality or residency. This would make an important statement about the desire of a future British government to work constructively with the EU.

Dr Howard B Broughton
Madrid, Spain

Retrain MPs to pick fruit and drive lorries

Suella Braverman's belief in the transformative magic of Brexit appears to know no bounds (Braverman rejects Tory calls to ease visa rules, 15 May). Apparently HGV drivers, butchers and fruit-pickers recruited from abroad constitute "low-skilled foreign labour" whereas, thanks to Brexit, Brits trained up to do the same jobs will be part of a "high-skilled, high-waged economy".

Michael Pyke
Lichfield, Staffordshire

● What a great idea to train more UK fruit-pickers. The home secretary could start in her own back yard and get MPs to ditch their second jobs to take up the training. Even the dimmest should be able to collect a punnet or two. Could John Crace supervise and give regular performance updates?

David Duell
Durham

● Is the move to encourage people to retrain in butchery, truck driving and other essential trades to include those educated at public schools and Oxford? Or will it just be for those equally intelligent people with no family money and connections who go to "ordinary" schools and universities?

Joan Friend
Oldham, Greater Manchester

● The home secretary would have more success recruiting UK-based lorry drivers if the appalling and limited roadside facilities for them were drastically improved.

Sam White
Lewes, East Sussex

● Suella Braverman appalled by culture wars (Tory MPs tell Braverman: quit the PM pitch and stick to the day job, 16 May)? What next? The pope appalled by religion?

Rib Davis
Leyton, London

Period products must be properly regulated

The lack of innovation addressed in your article (Ninety years since the first Tampax, why aren't there better menstrual products?, theguardian.com, 4 May) makes for depressing reading. Not so much in relation to some very innovative products that are available - ie period pants, which can be thrown in the washing machine, and cups - but the fact that they are still largely unregulated. Independent tests have found harmful chemicals in some - a few intentionally added, such as antimicrobials, some not, such as plastics derivatives or PFAS, known as "forever chemicals".

This is largely due to a lack of transparency about what is in these products that we use in one of the most absorbent parts of the human body - and a lack of effective regulation. Fragrance levels in cosmetics have to be listed on packaging yet, incredibly, the same doesn't apply for period products.

At Wen (Women's Environmental Network), we have been calling for regulation for decades due to concerns about health and the environment. This year, during our Environmenstrual week of action in October, we are demanding a menstrual health, dignity and sustainability action plan from the government to address all the issues around menstruation and period products. We must not keep making the same mistakes with period products, perpetuating old taboos around "sanitising" products with antimicrobials.

Progress comes with healthier, safer, more affordable, reusable and sustainable period products that benefit health and the environment.

Helen Lynn
Wen

Corrections and clarifications

● The Bafta-winning gameshow The Traitors was broadcast by the BBC, not Channel 4 ('You paved way for so many,' Syal is told as she gets lifetime award, 15 May, p9).

● An article referred to Edinburgh University bracing itself for protests over an Edinburgh Academics for Academic Freedom event "on campus on Saturday 20 April"; it is on Saturday 20 May (University embroiled in row over trans rights after film is blocked, 13 May, p20).

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After cancer, I too have found my voice

Joanne Harris's article (Facing down cancer freed me from fear, 15 May) resonated profoundly with me. Having been brought up with the same phrase about being seen and not heard, I am now embracing my super-short hairstyle six months after finishing breast cancer treatment. Rather than being diminished by the debilitating effects of the treatments, which linger on, this is an encouragement to finally find my voice. To become that woman who says it as it is, rather than using my antennae to always sense what the other person wants to hear. It is time now to be both seen and heard.

Diane Chorley
Bath

● Nice of Neil Tennant to stick up for AI songwriting (Report, 16 May). When the Pet Shop Boys became popular, I and other music lovers thought everything they did sounded like it was computer-generated and lacked the human musical touch, so maybe his support is not surprising.

David Rennie
Cardiff

● I wholeheartedly agree with Janet Hawkins about the benefits of joining U3A (Letters, 16 May). I joined three years ago, do Spanish and French classes (we meet at the Old Ship pub in Richmond), and have started a junk metal sculpture group - meeting new friends I wouldn't have had otherwise.

David Halley
Twickenham, London

● Years ago, an elderly neighbour would stand outside her back door at night, chillingly shouting: "Satan! Satan!" It was months before we realised that she owned a black cat (Letters, 16 May).

Toby Wood
Peterborough, Cambridgeshire



Michael Roberts

Writer, art director and illustrator behind the transformation of Tatler into a top fashion glossy

The preferred medium of the fashion journalist Michael Roberts was Canson art paper, which he scissored freehand into crisp-cut collages, or snipped into minute dots to reassemble into mosaics, for magazine covers or book illustrations. His art reflected his life in fashion. He wrote about it, commissioned unexpected others to do so, photographed for media and ads, and charmed cranky lensmen into snapping for him.

He could source the clothes, choose the crazy locale, stage the shoot's story, and write a witty critique of the enterprise. He was also always the most elegant person involved, effortlessly cool.

Roberts, who has died aged 75, never bothered with a résumé, since every new role seemed to just develop, but he had a serious career. He was a writer on the Sunday Times in the 1970s, when couture catwalk drama and designer celebrity demanded a voice that was both theatre critic and gossip columnist. Then from 1979 he was art director of Tatler magazine, when the editor, Tina Brown, transformed it from a country house title into the shiniest glossy – he and she both believed that fashion in print was a money-based transaction, here today and gone tomorrow.

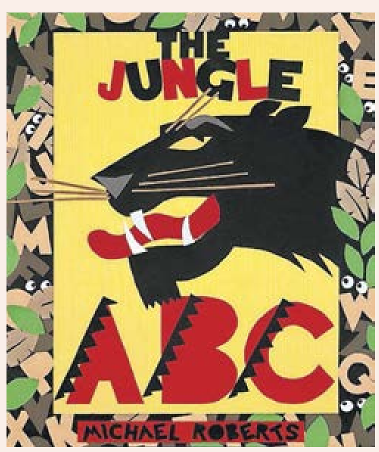
They were both out for mischief. Roberts could persuade even an institution such as Eton college to cooperate in its own mockery, though his best joke, for a cover, was to dress, style and photograph – complete to a flash of doubt in her eyes – Vivienne Westwood impersonating Margaret Thatcher in 1989. A caricaturist, he could similarly make over the designer Rifat Ozbek into the dragon empress editor Diana Vreeland, and a drag queen into Dusty Springfield.

In his light, droll voice, Roberts would tell you that the mechanics of fashion were no more interesting than car maintenance, and kept his eye on a wider visual world. He might go to a garment city in its fashion week and not attend a single show, since the visual future was more evident on its streets, or turn up at an event in an emerging-market country, and write truthfully about its hopes and pretensions. He never lost his openness to what he saw.

Above, Roberts in New York in 2009. His first paper-collage book, The Jungle ABC, below, was published in 1998
LARRY BUSACCA/ GETTY IMAGES

Roberts attributed this impish approach to his lifetime outsider status. What he was not frank and funny about were his origins, admitting only (with variations) to being born in Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire, his mother English, and his father, who died when he was a child, from St Lucia; being mixed heritage made for a miserable childhood in tough boarding schools. The way out was High Wycombe College of Art, where he swapped from fine art to graphics to fashion. He won an ad agency illustration competition, for which the prize was a trip to New York. There he met Andy Warhol and the photographer Richard Avedon, and had drawings published in Women's Wear Daily.

Back in London, he was noticed by Janey Ironside, a professor of fashion at the Royal College of Art, while in 1969 Molly Parkin, the rapscallion fashion editor of the Sunday Times, employed him as assistant. He filled in so freshly when a regular writer fell ill that he was awarded a weekly entry. Roberts's notions were cheeky and unclassifiable – sending the war photographer Don McCullin to shoot Paris collections – right for a fracturing fashion era, half reviving couture, half punk.



"He saw that selfies and the ability to transmit internet images would soon lead to the downfall of magazines

The editor of the Sunday Times, Harold Evans, introduced him to Brown and Roberts was relieved to leave his snarky commentary slot for Tatler when she went there. Five years later she brought him to a US audience as fashion director of Vanity Fair after she was appointed editor: their VF collaborations lacked Tatler's satire but gained American sass and pizzazz.

Roberts was at home anywhere, working for most national editions of Vogue, besides VF. As well as his unstoppable flow of ideas, he knew how to do things, usually self-taught (although he had learned at college how to ease in the head of a sleeve to the shoulder), and often had to in order to achieve the standard he required. That was why he took up photography, first for fashion and ads, then for portraits and people, drawing on advice direct from his hero Irving Penn: "There is always enough light" and "you don't need more than two rolls of film". Roberts began to direct film, too, with the MTV award-winning music video Limbo (1987) for Bryan Ferry, handmaking its graphics in homage to the cabaret artist Josephine Baker.

Brown moved to the New Yorker in 1997, and told Roberts to direct its fashion editions: since it seldom descends to camerawork, he papercut 22 covers plus illustrated features before returning to Vanity Fair in 2006 for a last grand round of fashion photography. As a future-predictor he saw that even as magazines fattened before the 2008 crash, mass fashion, selfies and internet image transmission would soon be their downfall.

Roberts was gone before the glossies dwindled. His first paper-collage illustrated book, The Jungle ABC, nominally for children, was published in 1998, and he drew, wrote, contributed to and art-directed others over the next 20 years, including the memoir of the Vogue creative director Grace Coddington and two children's books about the adventures of an orangutan, GingerNutz, that he based on red-haired Grace.

He directed a documentary, Manolo: The Boy Who Made Shoes for Lizards (2017), about his friend and fellow troublemaker Manolo Blahnik, and published two volumes of photographs of Sicily. In 2022 he was appointed CBE.

After living light with little baggage in London, Paris, New York and Rio de Janeiro, he finally settled in Sicily, which he loved as a place where classical Rome, Italy, the Middle East and north Africa all left traces, especially mosaics.

Veronica Horwell

Michael Roy Roberts, illustrator, journalist and photographer, born 2 October 1947; died 3 April 2023

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Other lives

NOBBY CLARK



Ann Pinnington

Pub theatre producer responsible for a number of productions that transferred to the West End

My mother, Ann Pinnington, who has died aged 84, was a producer and artistic director who championed pub and fringe theatre. Her work in those spheres led to a number of touring productions and West End transfers, including The Winslow Boy (1983), The Jungle Book (1985) and The Seven Year Itch (1986).

Born in Beverley, east Yorkshire, she was the daughter of Marjorie (nee Simpson) and George Russell, a jockey. While attending Hull College of Commerce school she was offered a place at Rada in London, although she was persuaded by her parents not to take it up. Instead, after leaving school at 18, she trained as a nurse at Hull Royal Infirmary, but left towards the end of her course.

Ann went on to work as a PA at the Armstrong Patents manufacturing company before becoming a travelling sales representative for the Brody kitchen design firm and then senior regional manager at Carmen, the heated hair-roller company. During the 1960s she also earned money as a part-time model and entered beauty queen contests, at one point becoming Miss British Rail (north of England).

She owned and ran three hairdressing salons in Hertfordshire during the late 70s and set up a small golf club manufacturing company, MGee-HASP industries. However, in her early 40s she finally decided to enter the theatre, initially working as a public relations officer for the Bristol Hippodrome then, after a short spell with the Theatre Royal in Bath, for Portman Theatrical Productions in the late 80s.

After that she moved into being a producer and artistic director, working for more than 15 years alongside Dan Crawford as co-artistic director at the King's Head theatre in Islington, north London. In 2005 she helped to navigate the theatre through the aftermath of Dan's death in a creative partnership with Stephanie Sinclaire, playing a crucial role in a fundraising campaign and reviving the theatre's outreach activities. She was a staunch proponent of access to the arts, organising tours to schools and small arts venues.

A passionate supporter of new playwrights, in 2006 she founded Ann Pinnington Productions and produced plays at the New End theatre in Hampstead, Riverside Studios in Hammersmith, and, in central London, the Arts theatre, Trafalgar Studios and Park theatre. It was at the Park theatre that she was involved in her last show, The Rise and Fall of Little Voice (2018), which she co-produced with me and which starred her granddaughter Rafaella Hutchinson and me.

She is survived by her second husband, Roger Pinnington, whom she married in 1974; two daughters, me from her first marriage, to Keith Pearson, which ended in divorce, and Nikki from her second; two stepchildren, Suzanne and Andrew, from Roger's first marriage; eight grandchildren and one great-grandchild.

Sally George

Colin Rochester

Academic and practitioner who helped establish a scholarly community focused on the voluntary sector

My father, Colin Rochester, who has died aged 80 following chest and fungal infections, was a leading member of the scholarly community that explored and helped to define the key theoretical and practical features of what became recognised as the voluntary sector.

After leaving university, Colin worked for a brief spell as a further education lecturer; he then took up a post with the Workers' Educational Association, where he stayed for 10 years, latterly as national development officer. In 1978 he was appointed head of Cambridge House and Talbot, the Cambridge University settlement in south London that works to tackle poverty and social injustice.

Towards the end of his time at



Cambridge House he became one of the first cohort of part-time students to study the voluntary sector at Brunel University. He was taught by the leading scholar in this field David Billis, who was to remain a mentor and friend.

Obtaining his MA in 1987, Colin embarked on a second career as a consultant and researcher on voluntary organisations and volunteering. This led to lecturing and research posts at the London School of Economics and from 1999 at Roehampton University, where he established the Centre for the Study of Voluntary and Community Activity. After his retirement from Roehampton in 2007, he continued to undertake research and write about voluntary action, and he held visiting fellowships at Birkbeck, the LSE and the University of Kent.

Colin made a key contribution to the literature dedicated to his subject. As well as chapters, articles and handbooks, he produced six books, including An Introduction to the Voluntary Sector (1995), edited with Justin Davis Smith and Rodney Hedley, and Volunteering and Society in the 21st Century (2010), with Angela Ellis Paine and Steven Howlett. He also published guides aimed at voluntary sector practitioners. Colin played a major role in the development of an academic community focused on voluntary action.

Born in Palmers Green, north London, he was the younger son of Arthur, a GPO telephone engineer, and Ellen (nee Lowe), a "nippy", or waitress, at Lyons Corner House and school dinner lady. He was educated at Edmonton county school and at Exeter University, where he studied history, and met Irene Goss, a fellow student, whom he married in 1965. They went on to have me. Irene died in 2007 and Colin later formed a longstanding personal and professional partnership with Meta Zimmeck.

Colin had three other important interests alongside his work. A self-taught clarinet and saxophone player who possessed more enthusiasm than technical prowess, he co-led a jazz band for more than 30 years. After a short and undistinguished playing career, he became a keen supporter and member of both Surrey and Middlesex county cricket clubs. He managed to combine both those interests with a third – the enjoyment of real ale.

He is survived by Meta, me, and by his brother, Brian, and sister, Robbie.

Catherine Rochester



Lillian Mirmak

American-born civil rights campaigner who made London her home for more than 50 years

My mother, Lillian Mirmak, who has died aged 87, was a court reporter, political activist and a great lover of culture and the arts. She grew up in the US, where she was active in the civil rights movement, and then lived in London for more than 50 years.

Born in York, Pennsylvania, Lillian was the eldest of three children of Katherine (nee Craiger), a shop assistant, and John Mirmak, a draughtsman in a factory. She went to John P McCaskey high school in Lancaster, graduating in 1953, and then worked for two years in the office of a local meat factory before enrolling at Millersville Teachers College.

Initially intending to be an actor or writer, she became increasingly politicised through her late teens. The turning point came when she attended the Prayer Pilgrimage for Freedom, an early civil rights demonstration in Washington, in 1957. She brought back Freedom Now pins and distributed them to her peers at college. Her teachers decided she was a bad influence and she was summarily expelled.

An interest in socialism was fired up by her friends who had fought in the Korean war and had become disillusioned with US foreign policy. She became an active member of the Young People's Socialist League and the Fellowship of Reconciliation.

Lillian took part in the Freedom Rides throughout the south, encouraging voter registration in the face of death threats, intimidation and violence. She staged sit-ins in support of equal employment rights for black employees and helped organise buses to the March on Washington, in 1963, where Martin Luther King gave his "I have a dream" speech. Her brother recalls her taking him to see Malcolm X speak, and she was close friends with many young black activists, including a pre-Black Panthers Stokely Carmichael.

During this period, she took up secretarial work with a number of local employers, and then switched to a temping agency called Dot Girls, part of the Dictaphone company, and through them got the chance to work in the UK.

Lilian moved to London in 1969, and began a 49-year career as a court reporter for the firm Marten Walsh Cherer, working mainly with the royal courts of justice and in later years with HMRC. She raised me as a single mother, somehow still finding time to campaign for the Labour party at three elections. She also spent a decade from the mid-1980s to the mid-90s as chair of governors at Warwick Park school, in Peckham, south-east London.

At the turn of the century she discovered she had ovarian cancer and underwent operations and rounds of chemotherapy with typical determination and courage. She spent her final 20 years travelling the world, visiting Greece, Croatia, Italy, Germany, Taiwan, China and Turkey – where she flew in a hot air balloon over Cappadocia.

At the age of 80 she dyed her hair electric blue, a look so distinctive she was often photographed by art students, the art enthusiast becoming a late-life muse.

She is survived by me and her two grandchildren, Robyn and Lara, and by her younger brother, Ed.

Ali Mirmak

Birthdays

Ivor Bolton, conductor, 65; **Sir Rodric Braithwaite**, diplomat and author, 91; **Bill Bruford**, drummer, 74; **Bridget Cherry**, architectural historian, 82; **Andrea Corr**, singer, 49; **Enya**, singer and songwriter, 62; **Craig Ferguson**, comedian, 61; **Lucy Frazer**, Conservative MP and culture secretary, 51; **Simon Fuller**, music entrepreneur, 63; **Dick Gaughan**, singer and songwriter, 75; **Josh Homme**, musician and songwriter, 50; **Sir Simon Hughes**, former Lib Dem MP and minister, 72; **Alan Johnson**, former Labour MP and cabinet minister, 73; **Alan Johnston**, journalist, 61; **Johanna Konta**, tennis player, 32; **Sugar Ray Leonard**, boxer, 67; **Christine Ohuruogu**, Olympic athlete, 39; **Tamara Rojo**, artistic director, San Francisco Ballet, 49; **Chris Skidmore**, Conservative MP, 42; **Chloe Smith**, Conservative MP and secretary of state for science, innovation and technology, 41; **Jeremy Vine**, broadcaster, 58; **Paul Whitehouse**, comedian, actor and writer, 65.

Letters

Murray Melvin

In the early 1950s Murray Melvin (obituary, 18 April) acted with the Hampstead Drama Group, north London. My parents, Constance and George Hawkins, did too, and George was its "props maker". A child at the time, I recall Murray as indeed a lovely man.

The HDG rehearsed its mostly one-act plays in Burgh House, and was run by Jess Harrison, a forthright, leftwing Scot from Shetland and then Glasgow, and one of my mother's closest friends. Impressed with Joan Littlewood, Jess organised a group visit to her Theatre Workshop company. I think Murray moved on from HDG almost immediately.

Jennifer Hawkins Opie

At the Hampstead Drama Group, Murray Melvin and I acted together in one-act plays and They Came to a City by JB Priestley. We were mad about theatre and dance, and relished those early heady days of discovery.

Philippa Buss

Announcements

In Memoriam

SHEPHERD, Ian Alexander George, 22 March 1951 to 15 May 2009. Thinking of you on the day as on every day. Still missing your robust commentary on the world – it's hard living these turbulent times without you.

For Announcements, Acknowledgments, Adoptions, Anniversaries, Birthdays, Births, Deaths, Engagements, Memorial Services and In Memoriam, email us at announcements@theguardian.com including your name, address and telephone number or phone 0203 353 2114.

Puzzles

Yesterday's solutions

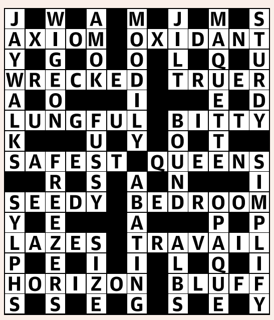
Killer sudoku
Easy

5	8	9	3	2	4	6	1	7
1	2	4	5	7	6	9	8	3
6	7	3	1	9	8	5	4	2
3	5	8	7	1	9	4	2	6
4	1	7	8	6	2	3	5	9
9	6	2	4	5	3	1	7	8
7	9	5	6	8	1	2	3	4
2	3	1	9	4	7	8	6	5
8	4	6	2	3	5	7	9	1

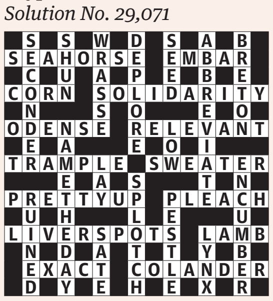
Medium

9	7	5	2	3	4	8	6	1
8	3	4	6	9	1	2	7	5
1	6	2	5	8	7	4	9	3
4	5	1	9	2	8	6	3	7
6	2	9	7	1	3	5	4	8
7	8	3	4	6	5	1	2	9
3	4	7	1	5	2	9	8	6
2	1	6	8	7	9	3	5	4
5	9	8	3	4	6	7	1	2

Codeword



Cryptic crossword
Solution No. 29,071

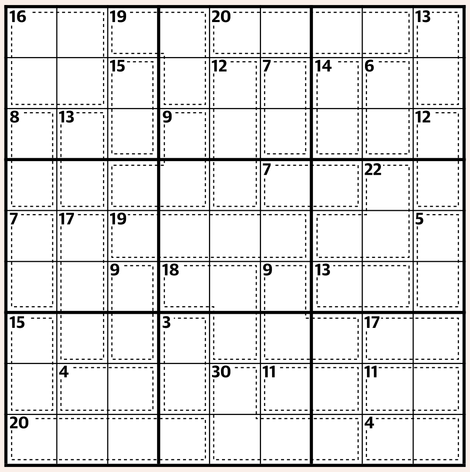


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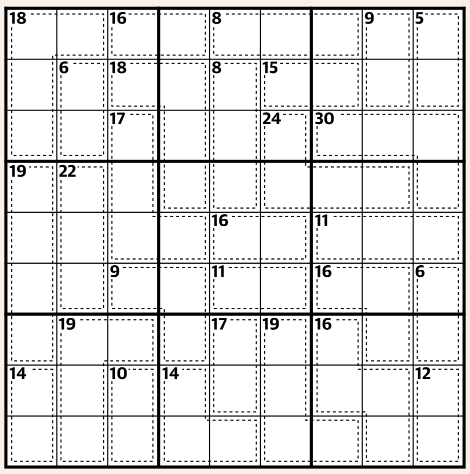
Killer sudoku

Easy

The normal rules of sudoku apply: fill each row, column and 3x3 box with all the numbers from 1 to 9. In addition, the digits in each inner shape (marked by dots) must add up to the number in the top corner of that box. No digit can be repeated within an inner shape.

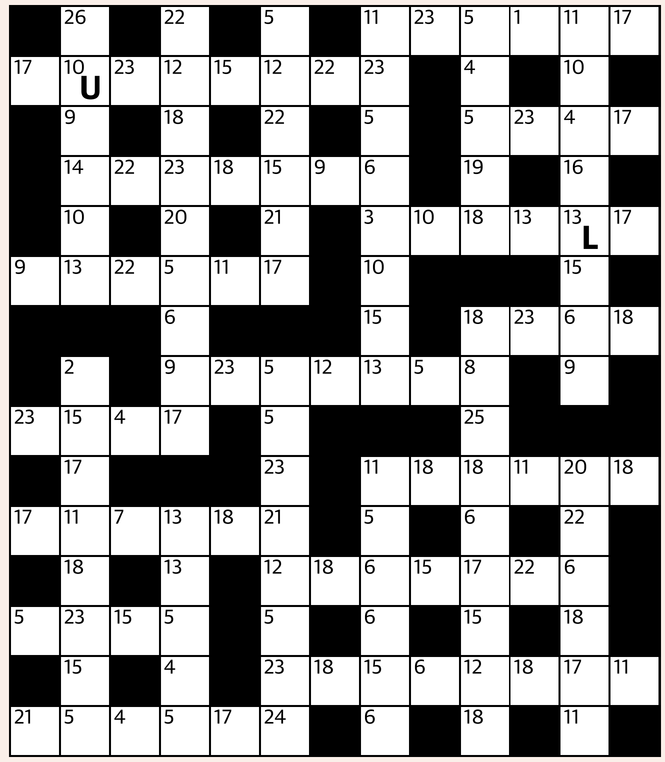


Medium



Codeword

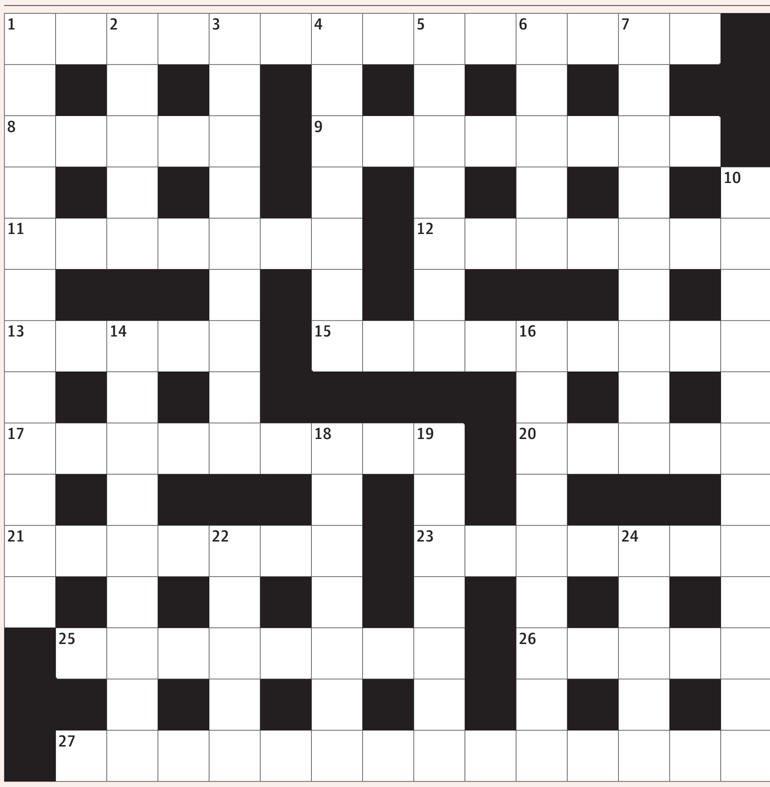
Each letter of the alphabet makes at least one appearance in the grid, and is represented by the same number wherever it appears. The letters decoded should help you to identify other letters and words in the grid.



A B C D E F G H I J K ~~L~~ M N O P Q R S T ~~U~~ V W X Y Z

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10 U	11	12	13 L
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26

Guardian cryptic crossword No 29,072 set by Jack



Across

1 Fed up and ready to spit feathers? (4,2,3,5)
8 Revolutionary party that can impart pressure to overcome resistance (5)
9 University charges department that is first to send delegates (8)
11 What attempted to correct young virtuous person in book exam (7)
12 Reading article in need of editing (7)
13 What boozer, on reflection, must welcome? (5)
15 Poor chap tried going for almost nothing (4,5)
17 One term is confused with another shorter one (9)
20 Extremist partly responsible for dreadful tragedy (5)
21 What is hypothetically supported by the Guardian? (2,5)
23 Lead would not be used for this drill component (3,4)
25 Crude relic that's not entirely ruined (8)
26 Keep taking ecstasy and be sick (5)
27 Tentatively offer excellent financial backing (7,7)

Down

1 Helping to support criminal belied careful thought (12)
2 Hesitate to state women must come first (5)
3 Short-tempered Blairite upset about what finishes off Starmer (9)
4 Made uncertain progress close to indistinct and strange light source (7)
5 City uprising captures a former leader thereof (7)
6 Reporter's credit follows work associated with the Observer (5)
7 Handling of patient's request ends in open court (9)
10 Great swimmer's way of stopping water getting into trunks? (8,4)
14 Dome's coverage of scene from musical? (9)
16 Royal household's popular sequence of dates? (9)
18 Dog is tense and more likely to stray by the look of it (7)
19 Steal from IT company's distribution like Android? (7)
22 Place to have food and gather (5)
24 Change plug fitting (5)

The Guardian



"I'm a very spiritual person!

Eurovision winner **Loreen** on fear, fame, family and fighting for human rights

G2

Wednesday 17/05/23

Life & Arts

Arwa Mahdawi
The dark side of the sunshine state
page 3



Conga to Beethoven ...
... and nine more ways to save classical music
page 8

A moment that changed me
An attack forced me out of the ring – and on to the stage

Oliver Sykes dreamed of becoming a professional boxer. Then six teenagers set upon him in the park ...



Sykes aged 15 and, below, today

At 16 I had my whole life planned out. I was a budding amateur boxer with bags of passion and talent. I was going to be a star. My dad was my coach. Our mission was to win the national youth championships, then conquer the Olympics, before turning professional and working together to capture a world title. But, in one night, this dream of ours was taken away.

It was a Friday evening. Teenagers stood around the park chatting and drinking. I was taking a night off from training to ride my BMX. I remember rolling towards the grind rail, sliding down and landing well enough to earn a cheer from my mates.

As I rolled around the back of the main ramp, I began to cycle hard, building up speed, but mid-jump I caught sight of something in the sky whistling its way right towards the spot where I was heading. Before I could react, a beer bottle had exploded right in front of me, showering me in shards of broken glass. I hit the concrete hard and lay there bleeding.

Next thing I knew, my mates were screaming obscenities from across the skate park, but louder than that was the sound of pounding footsteps. I turned just in time to see the first fist strike my face. I couldn't tell you how many times I got hit during the six-on-one beat-down. But it was a lot. I remember thinking: "What have I done to deserve this?" and "Why isn't anybody helping me out?"

Then things went from bad to worse. One lad used his knee to pin down my right arm. He splayed my hand on the ground and held it there. Then he shouted at his mate to stamp on it. His friend obliged, repeatedly.

Suddenly, as if by magic, it stopped. Groups of kids from across the park had come together to form a human shield – an example of real courage and solidarity for which I'll be forever grateful. I staggered home with the help of my friends.

It wasn't until the following morning, when I looked in the bathroom mirror, that I realised my sporting dreams were over. My face looked like one big bruise. There was massive swelling around my eyes, a deep cut on the ridge of my nose and teeth marks on my chest. What's more, I soon learned that my right hand was permanently damaged. I was overwhelmed with despair.

Six years later, my counsellor set up a meeting with the lad who engineered the foot stomping. He told me that cocaine had had a big part to play that night, as had jealousy and toxic masculinity. You see, the local newspaper had run a feature about me representing Buxton Amateur Boxing Club at their annual show. These lads had seen it and decided to bring me down a peg or two. Well, they succeeded. I never boxed competitively again after the incident in the park – it killed my appetite for the sport.

My dad was my rock. At the time, we were living in poverty in rural Derbyshire. He was single-handedly raising my three brothers, two sisters and me. As challenging as that sounds, Dad dropped everything to give me the support I needed. Ultimately, he advised me to focus on my education.

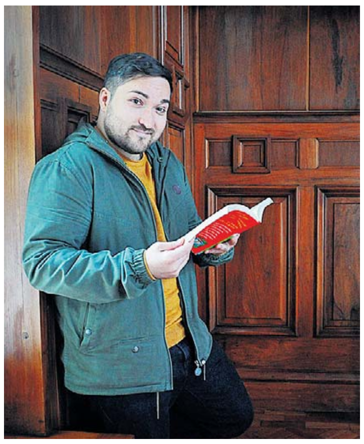
Though boxing had been my main obsession, followed closely by BMXing, I was also involved in theatre, having played several bit parts in school plays (usually, the small funny guy) and a couple of larger roles with Chapel Players, the local amateur dramatics club.

Dad and I still loved boxing and we would often spend evenings watching reruns of old shows. I remember being absolutely in awe of Muhammad Ali: he was so funny, eccentric and theatrical. He was a performer too, so the idea of switching to the theatre never felt daunting to me – I'd still be dancing under those lights in rooms full of people, only this time nobody would be trying to punch me in the face.

So, I swapped punchbags and skipping ropes for scripts and rehearsal rooms, and I relished the thrill of performing in front of a live audience. Theatre soon became my biggest passion and it has remained this way through college, university (where I graduated with a first-class honours degree in theatre studies) and into the world of work.

Now, looking back on my 10 years in the arts, I wonder whether being assaulted in that park all those years ago was meant to be, because being involved in theatre has enabled me to do so much that sport couldn't.

> **"Your ambitions can slip through your fingers. But it's how you respond that counts**



For instance, at the core of my work as a producer and an artist, I have been helping young people from low-income backgrounds to access the arts – through creating work experience opportunities, mentoring, or producing the work of artists whose voices are underrepresented.

Not only that, but the sport has found its way back to me. I'm currently touring a stage adaptation of my debut children's book, Alfie's First Fight. The story revolves around a child boxer being raised by his dad, who fights for his family and triumphs against all the odds. It's amazing to think that I can provide children with inspiring stories that draw on my own experiences.

Sometimes life throws you a curveball. Your dreams can disappear. Your ambitions can slip through your fingers. But I've learned that it's how we respond that counts. In the face of adversity, you must never give up – you must forge new paths, dream new dreams and find what makes you happy.

Oliver Sykes' production of Alfie's First Fight is touring nationally until October

PHOTOGRAPH: DAWN KILNER

Arwa Mahdawi



Ron DeSantis has been busy legalising bigotry in Florida

You know what I love about living in the US? Freedom! You can choose between multiple overpriced insurance companies to provide you with healthcare, for example. The companies, in turn, can charge you whatever they like for their services. If they want to charge you $1,500 (£1,200) for some toenail fungus cream, that is their prerogative. That's freedom, baby.

As if this wasn't glorious enough, the healthcare system in Florida has just had a new layer of freedom added to it. On 1 July, a new law goes into effect that means a doctor can look a potential patient up and down, decide they are giving off homosexual vibes and refuse to treat them because interacting with gay people goes against their personal beliefs. The doctor will not face any repercussions for denying care and has no obligation to refer the patient elsewhere.

I wish I was exaggerating but I'm not. Last week, Florida's Republican governor, Ron DeSantis, signed the Protections of Medical Conscience bill, which lets medical professionals and health insurance companies deny patients care based on religious, moral or ethical beliefs. While the new law doesn't allow care to be withheld because of race, colour, sex or national origin, there are no protections for sexual orientation or gender identity. The only bright spot is that hospitals must still abide by federal laws that require them to stabilise a patient with an emergency condition. In other words, you can't let a patient die just because they're wearing a Drag Race T-shirt.

> If a doctor decides a patient is giving off homosexual vibes, they can refuse treatment



At least, I don't think you can: it is hard to say precisely what is allowed under this new law because, like a lot of regressive Republican legislation, the bill is deliberately vague. Republicans love passing legislation with unclear language because it creates confusion and is difficult to challenge. The American Civil Liberties Union noted that the new law means "Floridians will have to fear discriminatory treatment from medical providers every time they meet a new provider, calling into question everyone's trust in their medical care."

DeSantis has been a very busy man signing a flurry of regressive legislation. The day before he signed his bill attacking healthcare equality, he signed a draconian immigration bill. And, on Monday, he signed a bill that would ban Florida's colleges and universities from spending state or federal money on diversity, equity and inclusion efforts. It also limits how race can be discussed on many courses. In a speech, DeSantis told prospective college students that if they want to study wacky things such as "gender ideology" they should get the hell out of Florida. "We don't want to be diverted into these niche subjects that are heavily politicised; we want to focus on the basics," said DeSantis. Sounds like a great advert for Florida's educational institutions: "Come here if you just want to learn the basics!" I'm not sure what "the basics" are but they clearly don't include studying Michelangelo or watching animated films since, in March, a Florida principal had to resign after parents were outraged that their kids were shown a picture of Michelangelo's David and now a Florida teacher is being investigated for showing her class a Disney movie featuring a gay character.

Having banned everything in sight, DeSantis's next big project appears to be modifying Florida's "resign-to-run" law so that he can run for president while still serving as governor. It is looking very likely that the Republican nominee for 2024 is going to be either DeSantis, a man who has turned the sunshine state into a hotbed of bigotry, or Donald Trump, a fellow bigot who has been found to be a sexual predator by the law. Please feel free to scream.

Trademarking a lettuce leaf is just the tip of the iceberg

Hannah Gadsby, an award-winning comedian, has curated an exhibition at the Brooklyn Museum about Pablo Picasso's complicated legacy, called It's Pablo-matic. This has nothing to do with the subject at hand - which is lettuce. Rather, I am alerting you to the exhibition because it's proof that terrible puns are now high art. Bear this in mind as I proceed to make as many terrible leaf puns as I can in the next few paragraphs.

OK, lettuce get back to the point. A US company called Little Leaf Farms is trying to trademark the curvy shape of its baby crispy green leaf lettuce. Is this some kind of GM-nightmare leaf, you might be wondering? Has big lettuce deviously planted cells in order to create a super-curvy salad? I wouldn't rule it out, but in this instance it seems the lettuce's shape is natural and the result of a particular seed being grown in a way that results in ruffled edges. Can you trademark that? US trademark experts seem to think it's a long shot, but possible.

But this is just the tip of the iceberg, isn't it? Please romaine calm, but we live in a world where absolutely anything can be commoditised, monetised, trademarked and privatised. If you make a joke on the internet and it goes viral, for example, it's almost guaranteed that someone will try to profit from it. Just ask Dan Atkinson, who coined a gem of a pun, "Wagatha Christie", and then, three years later, discovered that Rebekah Vardy had trademarked the phrase so that, if she feels like it, she can slap it on a line of branded meat tenderisers.

While that sounds brazen, it's nothing compared with the musician Drake, who trademarked "God's Plan", the title of one of his songs and a commonplace phrase, so that he could put it on cardigans. Nothing is sacred these days, not even salad.



Little Leaf Farms' curvy lettuce

COVER: CHARLI LJUNG. THIS PAGE: GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCKPHOTO; DGP/IMAGESPACE/REX/SHUTTERSTOCK

Pass notes



Nº 4,559

Tom Hanks

Age: 66.

Appearance: Forever on our screens.

Yes, we'll always have Splash. Not to mention all the other films.

Of course: Forrest Gump, Cast Away, Turner & Hooch. And don't forget about all the films still to come.

God willing, there will be plenty more. There's no God about it. Hanks will be in films long after he is dead.

Yes, but that's how films work. No, I mean that he will continue to star in films made after his death.

Who says? Hanks says.

He is a good actor, but I think he might be overestimating his powers with that claim. He wasn't speaking about his immortality, but about the awesome implications of artificial intelligence.

Oh God, AI. I've been ignoring it for months; why hasn't it gone away yet? Because it's busy being everywhere, changing everything, for ever. "I could be hit by a bus tomorrow and that's it," said Hanks on the Adam Buxton podcast, "but performances can go on and on and on and on."

Forgive me, but what does Hanks know about AI? In January, he and the director Robert Zemeckis announced a film called Here, in which deepfake technology will allow the actors to transform into younger versions of themselves.

I get it, AI is the future. According to Hanks, it's the present. "What is a bona fide possibility right now is - if I wanted to - I could get together and pitch a series of seven movies that would star me in them, in which I would be 32 years old from now until kingdom come," he said.

The old man is finally catching on. Actually, Hanks claims to have first grasped the implications of AI when he and Zemeckis made the CGI film The Polar Express in 2004.

I suppose he must have a better-than-basic understanding of the technology. "We saw that there was going to be this ability to take zeros and ones from inside a computer and turn it into a face and a character," he said.

OK, barely a basic understanding. He seems more focused on the legal ramifications of "my face and my voice and everybody else's being our intellectual property".

To be honest, I think that's a Hanks-specific problem. Nobody's going to be putting my face in a movie after I'm dead. Not a good movie, anyway.

Do say: "With AI technology advancing rapidly, we hope that one day soon we'll be able to address the tragic shortage of Tom Hanks films."

Don't say: "Another terrible performance from Tom Hanks. May he rest in peace."



O'Sullivan at Trinity College Dublin, where she got her PhD

'What I've done is miraculous'

Raised by addicts, broke and pregnant at 15, Katriona O'Sullivan never expected to succeed. She tells **Emine Saner** the extraordinary story of how she became a leading academic

In a lecture room at Ireland's most elite university, a woman in a hoodie and jeans, her hair in a messy bun, was sorting out some chairs. A student came in and told her that she couldn't clean in there because a class was about to start. "I know," the woman told her. "I'm teaching it." It is one of my favourite moments in Dr Katriona O'Sullivan's new memoir, not just for the delicious awkwardness, but because, despite O'Sullivan's path from virtually unimaginable poverty and trauma to a top-level education, it exposes the truth about whom we believe those institutions are really for.

What was funny, but also difficult, says O'Sullivan now, "was that I was struggling at that time with: 'Who am I?'" She had completed her PhD at Trinity College, Dublin, where she was lecturing in psychology and working in its access programme to encourage people back into education. "There's a uniform of the middle classes," she says, and she was wrestling with it (a colleague had even suggested she dress more like them). "I just wanted to be myself. I want to wear my hoops, and my tan, and I think it's important that we see people who are diverse." She smiles. "So I was being brave, going: 'I'm going to be me.'" The student read that look and saw a cleaner. "That's the vision they have of a person from the underclass, or a working-class background. I got up and taught my class, and I was amazing, because I'm a good teacher."

We meet in a hotel bar in Dublin. O'Sullivan, 46, is warm and direct, her accent somewhere between her Midlands upbringing and her Irish home. Her book, Poor, is one of the best I have read about the complexities of poverty and drug addiction. Looking back, you can see how all the elements that enabled O'Sullivan to get out of poverty clicked into place, like the combinations on a lock being turned to free her: teachers who had time to help her, youth workers who had money to support troubled teenagers, education grants, an access programme that encouraged her, and state-funded childcare and counselling. All things that, she points out, either no longer exist or are not sufficiently funded.

She puts her motivation way down the list, making the point that it's a myth that if you only work hard enough, you can achieve anything, because the system works against you - although I think she underestimates her awesome resilience and will.

The individual, she says, "is small in the decisions of their life, and we don't like that because it suggests we're powerless. But choice is a myth that's perpetuated by the middle classes - only a few people really can choose."

It is almost an accident that her life took this trajectory - it has not been the same for her siblings - and even though her climb brought her to a place that is preferable to where she was, it comes with sacrifices. It can be lonely, she says. "There's loss that goes with not fitting any more with your family and friends, and not being able to go back and be at ease in whatever shit you were living in."

At 15, O'Sullivan had left school and was pregnant and homeless; later, she struggled with addiction. Writing the book, she says, "has probably been the best thing I've ever done for myself. We live in a world that says: 'You can be, you can do, you can achieve.' I knew that wasn't true, but somewhere, deep down, there was a part of me that blamed myself for failing."

O'Sullivan grew up in Hillfields, a deprived part of Coventry in the West Midlands, the second youngest of five children. Their parents, Tony and Tilly, were heroin addicts. Home could be a frightening place, where drugs were dealt, and "friends" of their parents were often sprawled on the floor. When she was five or six, she discovered her father unconscious, a syringe still stuck in his flesh. He was jailed for selling drugs not long afterwards and she or one of her siblings would be used to smuggle drugs into the prison. While he was inside, one of the men who hung around the family raped her. "Yeah, well, he raped me, too," said her mother, when a traumatised seven-year-old O'Sullivan told her.

Amid all this chaos, neglect and abuse, school was an escape, and often the only place where she ate. She would like to see universal free school meals now, and recognition of "the fundamental need for kids who are in poverty to be fed in order to engage in education". But it goes further. "We underestimate the impact of teachers, and we don't pay enough attention to ensuring they can provide care. You have lack of funding for teaching, lack of time, lack of resources. In the UK, 22% of children are living below the poverty line, which means that there's a lot of kids, in a lot of schools, who are probably feeling like I did." In fact, Child Poverty Action Group says 29% of children were living in poverty in the UK in 2021-22.

One of O'Sullivan's teachers, Ms Arkinson, showed her not only love, but practical support. O'Sullivan often wet the bed and would come to school smelling of urine. Arkinson taught her how to wash every morning in the school bathrooms and kept a stack of fresh pants for her. "She changed my life," says O'Sullivan, and her eyes well up. "What she did for me lived on for ever. In a child who was empty, she made me feel OK in myself and that was life-changing."

But there were also the people – children, and adults, too – who were repelled by poverty. "Poverty has layers. We were probably the most extreme – no food, not washed, nits. Kids don't want to play with you. Sometimes, teachers would treat me that way as well, or expect me to perform in a way that was just beyond me because of what was going on at home."

There were glimpses of other lives. At three, she remembers her friend next door being given a hug by her mum, and wondering why her own mother didn't hug her like that. She always believed she deserved more, but over the years, she says, "hope and belief get eroded". The effort of survival was exhausting. "As a kid, I was hopeful, vivacious. And then as a teenager, with all the shit constantly, in the end, you just lean into it." There were people, she says, "trying to keep me hopeful, but it's very hard to battle against a lifetime of poverty and belief within a family. Eventually, it's like your light goes out."

As a teenager, she was arrested for fighting and stealing, and was involved in drugs. When she was 15, she got pregnant; the moment she found out, "just knowing that it's over – any bit of hope, any dreams". She wanted to finish school, but felt she couldn't go back, that all the teachers who expected her to fail would be proved right.

Her parents, although not angry about the pregnancy, told her she could not continue to live in the house with a baby. So, for several months she squatted in an abandoned flat, which became a teenage hangout for drinking and drugs, until social services found out and she was moved to a mother-and-baby hostel, then later to a council flat.

The next couple of years were difficult, dealing not only with the trauma of her own childhood, but also with a baby. We normalise the struggle of life with a newborn for older, middle-class mothers, she points out, "but young mothers are punished for the same thing". To her horror, O'Sullivan found the pattern of her childhood repeating itself: it was easy to forget the trauma of her life if she was out at pubs and clubs, drinking and taking drugs; desperate for love, she confused it with sex.

Although she would not necessarily have classed herself as an addict – "I sometimes think: 'Was it bad enough for me to own the same space that my parents did?'" – she could see the way she was going, and she wanted to stop. "I didn't want that for my son, and that was horrific. I remember waking up to the fact, living in Birmingham in this council house, no carpet on the floor. I used to buy electric and gas keys on a Monday, and by Friday, it was gone, so it was cold. I remember thinking: 'I am her, I'm my mam, and this beautiful boy deserves better.'"





With her son at their Birmingham council house



O'Sullivan, 13, with her mother

MAIN PHOTOGRAPH: JOHNNY SAVAGE/THE GUARDIAN

Poverty has layers. We were the most extreme – no food, not washed, nits

Her father was sober by this point. He had gone to Ireland with her mother after skipping bail following another arrest, and he arrived one day to take her son back there with him. "He rescued me. This man, who in some ways was responsible, actually rescued us."

Not long afterwards, O'Sullivan moved to Ireland, too, to be with her son, believing that if she could escape her surroundings, she could escape her trauma. It didn't work and eventually she went to a recovery centre. It was the start of getting better, though it would take some years. She was, she writes, "convinced of my 'place' in society and I believed that my place was with the underclass". She couldn't see further than surviving on benefits, cleaning toilets at a train station for extra money, and finding a man to live with; an occasional holiday might be nice. But one day, O'Sullivan bumped into a woman she knew – also a single mother, who had grown up in poverty – who was studying law at Trinity through an access programme. O'Sullivan marched straight over to the university and asked how to apply.

If getting into Trinity College sounds like a fairytale ending, it was, but it was also difficult. O'Sullivan lacked confidence, and nearly dropped out the week before her exams. Her parents – although her father was sober, her mother was still drinking heavily – relied on her, and she was a lone parent to her son. But she did it, and after passing the access course, she did a degree in psychology and got a first, and a PhD, focusing on addiction.

"It's like I lived two lives," she says. "A life up to the point where my mind was opened by education. Prior to that, I had no idea that you could be anything different." She is furious at the rhetoric around poverty – during the past decade especially – that if someone is poor, it is their own moral failing, and if only they worked harder, they could drag themselves out of it. "What I've done is miraculous, and rare, because we don't have investment. If I was in that situation now, I wouldn't be here."

It is society that loses, she points out. "We're missing talent, vibrancy and creativity. Because I've been empowered, I have been able to change my life, my children's lives. I'm not costly any more to the state."

Addiction, too, is seen as a personal failing rather than a complex issue. "There's nobody I know who is addicted to drugs who planned that," says O'Sullivan. "Especially for women with addiction, we do not provide enough support and services. My mother was judged so harshly, more than my dad, for being an addict. We need to look at how we moralise around addiction, and poverty."

Her memoir has transformed how she feels about her mother in particular. She loved her parents, she says, and when they weren't addicted to drugs or alcohol, they could be wonderful. "I've been able to see her in a different light, and re-find her," says O'Sullivan. In viewing their painful lives as a whole – both had traumatic beginnings, and both are now dead – she found compassion for them. "My dad was sick, my mam was sick. They were mentally unwell. I'm more angry at the way the system treated us than with them." The healthcare workers who roughly handled her unconscious father or told her drug-addicted mother, who had just given birth on the bathroom floor, that she shouldn't be allowed to have children; the police who raided the house and treated the children not as victims, but as "vermin"; the social services who sent the children back home to be abused and neglected.

I was convinced of my 'place' in society – and that place was with the underclass

She knew, intellectually, that she wasn't responsible for her neglect, or the abuse, but the feeling of shame stayed with her. "As if it's something to do with me. As a kid, when you're not loved by your parents for whatever reason – and I do believe they loved me, they weren't able to show it – it becomes: 'It's because there's something wrong with me.'"

For the people who can't recover from that, it is no surprise that patterns repeat themselves. Even for O'Sullivan, who by any measure is a huge success – happily married with three children, an impressive research career, an expert on access to education, and one of the most remarkable people you will ever meet – that voice is still there, but quieter now. "There will always be a small part of me that just wants to be loved by my parents," she says, and she apologises for the tears that spring to her eyes. "I think we carry our childhood with us. That's the long-lasting residue from mine."

The book helped. She likes herself now. "I think I've always liked myself, though. What's sad about growing up is that I can remember being a young girl, alive to the world, inquisitive, bright, but unfortunately I was born in this community where I wasn't given an opportunity to flourish." She feels now, nearly four decades on, closer to that girl, before the weight of neglect, predatory men, fear and low expectations crushed her. "Like, I'm alive again."

Poor is published by Penguin. To buy a copy for £13.19, go to guardianbookshop.com. Delivery charges may apply

'The moment I feel fear, I have to go in'

Fresh from her second Eurovision victory, the Swedish singer Loreen tells **Zoe Williams** about her nomad roots, her tough childhood and the 'dense energy' that forced her to compete

I meet Loreen in what I know, from meeting Sam Ryder here last year, is the fleeting habitat of the Eurovision elite – the Langham hotel in central London. Opposite the BBC, it is perfectly placed for the wave of broadcast interviews that ensue, and the ideal environment – subtle luxury in neutral tones – to be totally overwhelmed. The 39-year-old shouldn't be overawed, though, since she has won before, in 2012, making her the first woman to win twice in the competition's history.

Loreen's winning entry for this year, Tattoo, has already been streamed 60m times on Spotify alone and, as I type, it is only Monday. A mere 48 hours after the event, it's also the ninth most downloaded Eurovision song ever and it will go higher. If you haven't heard it, it's a well-executed piece of pop balladeering, with traces of Katy Perry to draw you in before it takes over with its own distinctive brio.

It is my sincere belief, though, that what might seem like overexcitement – Loreen's energy and verve, huge hand gestures, expressive face and air of delight – aren't in response to what happened in Liverpool at all. This is just her personality. Jagged fringe, metre-long tiny plaits snaking out of her regular hair like rope, puckish, childlike body language (cross-legged one minute, dancing the next), lovely dimpled face; she keeps beaming at me like an old friend.

Loreen originally said no to being Sweden's entry for a second time. "I'm a bit purpose-driven, so I thought: 'What's my purpose here? What can I give you guys?' But whenever I said no, there was this dense energy around me." She looks at the ceiling, shoots her eyes back at me knowingly, and murmurs "spiritual person", as if she's telling me a story and footnoting it at the same time. Looking back at the ceiling, she continues, "Universe? Seriously? Is this the way you want me to go?" If she were 5% less self-mocking and vaudeville, it would be annoying; as it is, she is incredibly fun to watch, and that's before she even starts performing.

She's been living like an athlete since October, she says, because Tattoo, between the crescendos and the primal, sinewy dancing, was extremely demanding: "I mean, I'm lying in a bed of sand. My nails are made out of stone. There is the sky. There is the mist, there is the wind." This is all useful clarification, since I did not get that she was communing with the earth. "The only thing I don't have is water. But then again, I sweat!" Her tone turns serious. "We've created a pretty messy world, haven't we? With all this information? Where do we ground ourselves?" I'm nodding enthusiastically, yes, nails made of stone, that sounds right. She shrugs, grinning. "What can I say, I'm a very spiritual person. I'm a nomad from the Atlas mountains."



Loreen after her victory in Liverpool

On that: she was born Lorine Zineb Nora Talhaoui in Stockholm and both her parents were first-generation immigrants from Morocco. Her mother arrived in Sweden at 14 with nothing, fleeing an arranged marriage. She met a man and had Loreen, the eldest of six, when she was 16. Loreen hares off briefly to tell me about her great-grandmother: "Her husband got killed in the war, she was beautiful, she was also very young. The family wanted her to remarry. She didn't want this. So she dressed up as a man, took her two children and fled to Algeria." At this point Loreen is using her hair to mimic a litham, the face covering of the nomadic men of north Africa. "She raised her children, still dressed up as a man. I have a picture of her with a gold tooth. The women in my family fought really hard to get me to where I'm at."

Back to Stockholm, 1989: her mother now has six children and is still only 22, and Loreen's parents split up. "I had to grow up pretty fast," she says, "because we had to help each other out. We didn't have any family in Sweden. There are so many things I didn't understand because I was raised by a child myself. Still, today, I won't know: is Christmas the 24th or the 23rd?" It was a hard scrabble and the family was very poor. There were upsides, though: "The beautiful thing when you're raised by a young person is that it's hard to be judgmental because nobody's taught you how, you know? 'That's wrong' or 'that's right'."

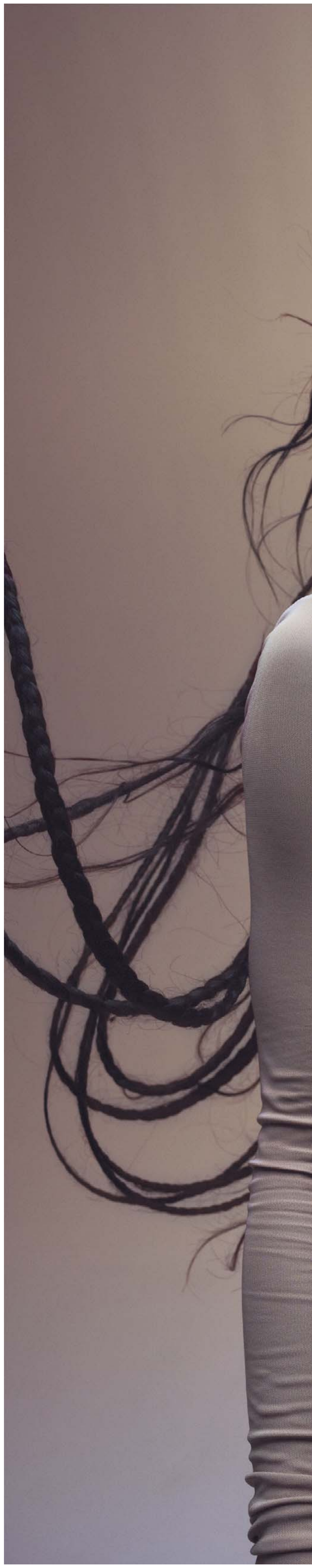
When Loreen was 13, her mother married again: "He came in with this very weird energy. You're raised by a single mother, this is a very powerful, determined woman. And then this big, soft, Swedish Santa Claus arrives. My mother was all about surviving. My stepfather was more like, 'Maybe we should just calm down a little bit. Relax, enjoy the small moments, this connection, here. Everything doesn't have to be a struggle.' I think he taught us how to show love." That was really not the direction I was expecting, from "very weird energy".

One sibling is an artist, another a surgeon, another works in marketing, another has his own business. She makes a pretty indisputable points about migrants and refugees, grounded in first-hand experience. "You want to have a purpose as a person, you want to feel like you matter. You don't want to sit around and not do anything. When we have our immigrants coming in to Sweden, we just make them sit there and wait. Let them have a purpose. Let them be a part of this society. This is really important. Otherwise there's segregation. How do you build up a confidence, where people think, 'I earned this. I did this'?"

Singing, in the bathroom and in church, was the only way Loreen found any moments to herself as a child. In the melee of five siblings, "it was a sanctuary, something I had for myself". So when she took her voice to Swedish Idol in 2004, "it was so painful", she remembers. "Somewhere I knew it was necessary, I guess – I didn't even know how a microphone worked … I didn't know what it was like to be judged, singing was so private. But that shock, what came out of it, I realised I needed to understand all of this. As a woman, you have to know your stuff. Otherwise people will come along and say, 'Darling, we'll fix this for you, you don't have to worry.' I want to be in control." She's still very much the self-taught maverick and doesn't understand why people do vocal arpeggios before they go on stage. "If you were going boxing, you wouldn't exercise for a couple of hours before," she says. "Your body would say, 'Come on, give me a break.'"

In 2005, she released her first single, The Snake, and presented a show on Swedish TV. "I wasn't that good, I honestly sucked at it." She then spent a number of years as a segment producer and director for reality TV shows before entering Melodifestivalen in 2011, a song contest almost as old as Eurovision, which determines Sweden's entry. It does this quite effectively – they have now won seven times, to make them, jointly with Ireland, the contest's most successful country. "I was shitless scared. But I did it, because I knew it was necessary. If you look at my performance [in Melodifestivalen], I was hiding. This is the subconscious mind: the big dress, the body language, people were like, 'That's very artistic', which it was, but I was hiding. The moment I feel fear, I have to go in. Because I don't want fear to control my life."

Loreen was unusual in 2012's Eurovision, for a few reasons; the





PHOTOGRAPHS: DOMINIC LIPINSKI/GETTY; CHARLI LJUNG

song, Euphoria, is pretty good and made the UK charts in its own right, staying there for many weeks after the contest. No shade on this magnificent spectacle, but the winning entries are often pretty kitsch and don't work out of context. The competition that year was held in Baku, Azerbaijan, and she had a meeting with a local activist group that she had found through Civil Rights Defenders, a Swedish NGO that supports grassroots organisations. Azerbaijan has a history of imprisoning political activists. The country's government was enraged by Loreen, lodging the familiar complaint, that she had "politicised" Eurovision. Swedish diplomats defended her. "I knew exactly what I was going to do because I believe that there is nothing more important than human life. What did they want me to say? 'Fuck a human life. People can have misery and struggle – it's not important because I'm going to sing my bloody song'? How is that even possible?"

Later the same year, she performed in Belarus and met the wife of Ales Bialiatski, the incarcerated pro-democracy activist who went on to win the Nobel Peace prize, while still in detention, 10 years later. "I don't like the word 'political'," Loreen says. "It's so small – I wish there was a bigger word for it. My people use music as a very powerful tool – you can create movements with it, depending on what type of energy you have. How can that not be political? Look at the Kalush Orchestra," she says, referring to last year's Ukrainian Eurovision winners. "This song brought a lot of hope to the Ukrainians."

She was performing in Ukraine the night before the Russians invaded, and performed in a fundraising gala for Ukraine less than a month later. Explaining her commitment to various causes – she's also campaigned for girls' education in Afghanistan, and inalienable children's rights – she points to her upbringing. "Seeing what I've seen in my life, I've seen poverty, I've seen pain in all different ways. There are good things and bad things about being raised by a single mother."

To return to the politics of Eurovision, one thing it's been incredibly good at is establishing international norms around LGBTQ+ visibility: from Paul Oscar, the first openly gay contestant in 1997, to Dana International, the first trans performer, who won in 1998, to Krista Siegfrids kissing her female backing singer on stage in 2013, there has long been a very clear message that nobody was going to hide to spare the feelings of

> **I don't want to know what people are saying, the positive or the negative**

bigots. Turkey, according to its broadcaster, no longer enters Eurovision because of its gay and transgender contestants. And while the Hungarian broadcaster hasn't said as much openly, Hungary has been absent since 2020, which is coincidentally when Viktor Orbán intensified his open persecution of the LGBTQ+ community, instituting a ban on LGBTQ+ content in schools or kids' TV the following year. Loreen came out as bisexual in 2017, although "the reason why people know about that", she says, "is because a newspaper asked me a question, and I answered, 'Love is where you find it.' The journalist said, 'So, you're bisexual?' And I said, 'I guess I am, because love is where you find it. Love is love. It has not much to do with this [gestures towards to her pudenda] so much as this [clasps heart].' She thinks she might subconsciously have been drawn to Eurovision because of the "acceptance, because I love the values of Eurovision. I love the fact that it doesn't matter what background you have – as long as you come with love and respect, you're allowed to be there."

Loreen is, of course, Sweden's ultimate darling right now: on Tuesday there was a victory march in her honour. She brought the trophy home in time for the 50th anniversary of Abba's 1974 win; there are already rumours that the group will perform at next year's competition. She's philosophical about the adulation. "You can be a favourite, and then it'll flip. I have a ground rule: I don't want to know what people are saying, I don't want to know the positive, I don't want to know the negative. If they say I suck, of course I'm going to care. If they think I'm the greatest, that's too much pressure. I don't want to go on that rollercoaster." Triumph and disaster, adulation and critique, are just the natural rhythm of life, she concludes: "The way it works, daylight, night, we get born and then we die, it's really hard to dodge that."

I am not a spiritual person, but I have to say, I like the whole package, from the stone fingernails to the stoic acceptance of death. Our time together has come to an end and she is rushing out to soak up more Eurovision glory. "Thanks, you have a nice vibe," she says. "No, no, no," I reply. "The nice vibe is all you."

Loreen's single Tattoo is out now



Above, Antonio Pappano; right, Sarah Connolly in Hamlet; below, Channel 4's The Piano



Above, the Aurora orchestra; below, Isata Kanneh-Mason



Ten ways to save classical music

Simon Rattle says UK opera houses and orchestras have never faced greater peril. How can they fight back? **Imogen Tilden** asks top musicians for their battle plans

1. Turn off your mobile phone and revel in the mysterious

Don't we all need a bit of time to be alone with our thoughts? Or to put away our phones and revel in something mysterious, beautiful and visceral? All music can offer us a haven for reflection, but classical music is constructed more like a narrative than a short lyric. You just need to give it time.

I find it upsetting that British politicians are afraid of revealing that they're interested in culture. In Italy, where I conduct the Santa Cecilia Orchestra, the audience applaud when a senior politician comes to a concert. Classical music - and all culture - helps grow our collective awareness of what it is to be a human being. That's a beautiful thing - why don't we celebrate it? Conducting at the coronation proved what an extraordinary array of talent we have here in the UK, from gospel choirs to brass bands. How can their existence be so threatened? Music's value and importance was there for everyone to see. I hope it provokes a real discussion for once. **Antonio Pappano, music director, Royal Opera House**

2. The Tories should honour their £90m manifesto pledge

I grew up on an estate in London with no interest in classical music. My life changed at 17 when I was given a ticket to hear a string quartet. I still remember what was played - Beethoven then Brahms (super boring, I thought). But then they played Ligeti's Métamorphoses Nocturnes, written in the 1950s, a few years after most of his family had been killed in the Holocaust. It completely captivated me.

I would never have experienced that if it wasn't for the Cavatina Chamber Music Trust, a charity that gives young people tickets to concerts. Everyone should have access to classical music. But without support - from charities, government, philanthropists - organisations will not be able to build future audiences, ticket prices will rise and classical music risks becoming the preserve of the few. We need a bigger cultural spend. I'd like to see a better settlement for the BBC and for the Arts Council. The government should supercharge philanthropy to make it much easier for private individuals to support the sector.

I'd also like to see the government honour its manifesto promise of a £90m premium for arts education in schools. If young people aren't exposed to it, classical music has no future. **Jamie Njoku-Goodwin, chief executive, UK Music**

3. Look to Europe and speak about the arts with pride

My experience of Europe, at the Bergen Philharmonic, suggests it takes greater pride in cultural establishments. Even people who don't visit the opera house in their city feel it is theirs. It gives the city strength, identity, a sense of community. Governmentally, the arts should be spoken about with pride.

We now have an entire generation who weren't offered music as part of their core curriculum. The educational and social benefits of arts education is proven. We need music education reinstated as soon as possible. **Edward Gardner, principal conductor, London Philharmonic Orch and chief conductor, Bergen Philharmonic**

Compare the billions Germany and France invest in the arts with our government's £458.5m contribution. Culture is central to these countries' psyche but our politicians are cowardly when it comes to promoting homegrown talent. **Sarah Connolly, singer**

4. Young people need to see that musicians are relatable

I was lucky growing up. I was surrounded by classical music, and my parents showed my siblings and I different role models of Black excellence. All of it is for you and all of it is possible, my parents said. Young people need to see that musicians are relatable. Social media is a great facilitator of that. I do a lot of work in schools: I play and talk and answer questions. Children see that I'm also a human being - and they could do what I do. **Isata Kanneh-Mason, pianist**

Working alongside more artists of colour in recent years has been an integral part of my development as a musician. I'd like to get to where society is better reflected throughout the industry - music is about the human experience and everyone should be able to access and make it. The changes need to be systemic, backstage as well as on stage. If you have a greater breadth of people on your board, the work you produce is going to change. **Matthew Kofi Waldren, conductor and co-founder, Your Turn Collective**

5. Rethink the finances to ensure musicians get a fair fee

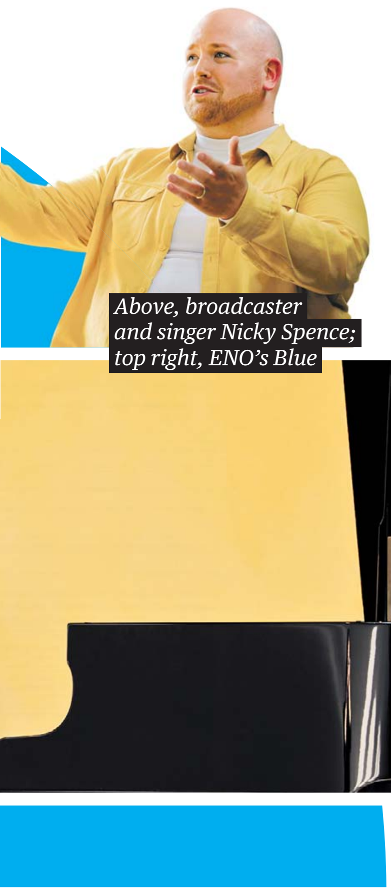
A composer's life in the UK is hard. Fees are too low, and organisations are struggling to justify commissioning new work when they're trying to stay afloat. It's rare to find young composers from working-class and diverse backgrounds. The destruction of music education in our state schools, BBC job cuts, ACE's funding cuts, and the undermining of the arts make the dream of a career in music seem unattainable.

Musical organisations need to focus their energies on sourcing co-commissioners to fund their projects, spreading the financial responsibility of the commission,

> At one show, the whole audience formed a conga line to the slow movement of Beethoven's 7th

PHOTOGRAPHS: TRISTRAM KENTON/THE GUARDIAN; ROBIN CLEWLEY; ©MARK BOURDILLON/LOVE PRODUCTIONS; GETTY IMAGES; RICCARDO MUSACCHIO; MARK ALLEN; FACTORY FILMS





Above, broadcaster and singer Nicky Spence; top right, ENO's Blue

ensuring a fair fee for the composer and guaranteeing repeat performances. Who wants to live in a world where the only composers are those whose parents can pay their rent? **Gavin Higgins, composer**

6. Nurture the grassroots, from choirs to brass bands

Growing up in Cumbria, opportunities to experience live music weren't ample but I picked up the saxophone at the Barracudas Carnival Arts Centre aged seven and I was hooked. As with sport, the ecosystem of our community relies on music being supported at every level - from local choirs and county orchestras to symphony orchestras and brass bands. In a fragmented world, we need these musical spaces to allow communities to come together with a shared mission and so nurture the audiences of tomorrow. **Jess Gillam, saxophonist and broadcaster**

7. Schools must go beyond the whole-class ukulele craze

Sustained investment in schools is at the heart of this, but it's also about upending the entrenched disparagement of classical music in wider society. "It's not for me" has to become "I can't live without this". This has to happen from the earliest school years. There should be free or inexpensive instrument tuition beyond the whole-class ukulele craze (a dead-end for populating orchestras of the future).

There should be regular encounters with live performance with affordable transport, and a massive upscaling of things like the once well-funded national Sing Up programme. We should train all early years teachers to be confident meshing music into the curriculum - teaching them to play the piano, for the leading of class singing, would be transformational. **Meurig Bowen, chief executive and artistic director, Britten Sinfonia**

8. Do a conga to Beethoven's 7th

At Aurora, we've found creative concert presentation to be a powerful tool in engaging a broader audience, whether playing at Printworks nightclub, inviting 100 people to create a giant graphic score during a concert, or playing from memory. At one show, the whole audience formed a spontaneous conga line to the slow movement of Beethoven's 7th.

The whole industry is engaging with this question: the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment's Night Shift series sees the orchestra perform informally in pubs; the Budapest Festival Orchestra's concerts, where audiences can sit on beanbags among the orchestra; or theatrical projects such as the Scottish Ensemble's Goldberg Variations, which saw musicians and dancers share a stage as equals. **Jane Mitchell, creative director, Aurora Orchestra**

9. Escape the elitist shoebox and hit the village hall

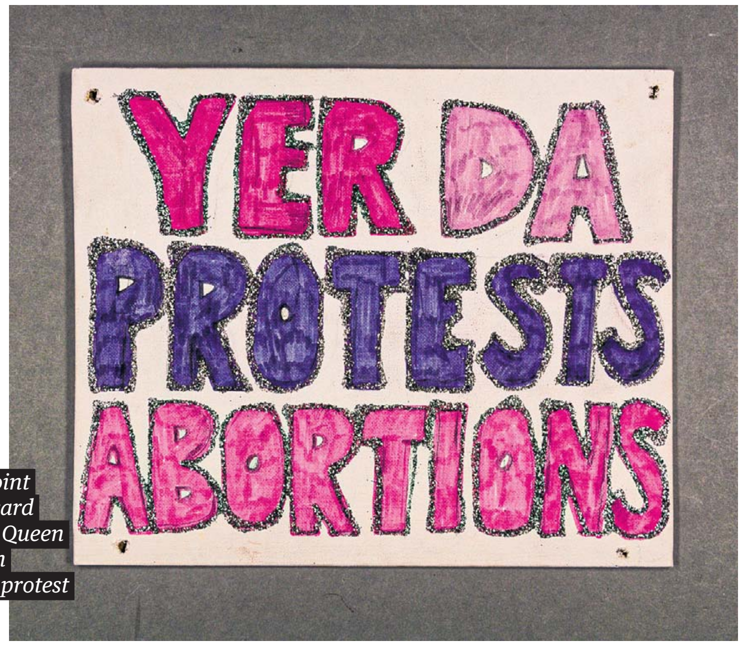
The situation we're facing is that there's less opera, and potentially less opportunity for companies to take risks. Not everyone is going to want to come to opera, but we need to create an environment where anybody can feel they can. **Matthew Kofi Waldren**

Opera is being forced into an elitist shoebox. It should be found in village halls as well as opera houses, but the funding cuts and deficit in education mean that many communities are unable to experience it. If you remove the education, then you don't get the supply of musicians, and the elitism and discrimination opera is accused of becomes self-fulfilling.

I began my career with the BBC Singers, then worked with Glyndebourne Touring Opera (not able to tour this year because of ACE cuts) and then English National Opera. All these avenues have been destroyed or compromised. In France or Germany, say, opera is not a dirty word. I'm sure not all politicians like pop music or football, yet they are always happy to be associated with those things. Why not classical music? **Sarah Connolly**

10. Put it on prime time TV - after all, The Piano was a hit

The reason classical music is seen as a luxury is because it's not readily available on mainstream media. Channel 4 has just had a surprise hit with The Piano, which obviously connected on a mass level emotionally. We tend to keep the personalities of fine artists on a pedestal as if exposing them to the masses might dilute their magical powers. Why don't we encourage a more human connection with the artist themselves? **Nicky Spence, singer and broadcaster**



To the point ... a placard from the Queen Elizabeth Hospital protest

PHOTOGRAPH: GLASGOW WOMEN'S LIBRARY

A banner in the works

Since 1991, Glasgow Women's Library has been collecting examples of protest art. **Greg Thomas** on the latest explosive additions: abortion rights placards

Last month, more than 100 anti-abortion protesters arrived at Queen Elizabeth University Hospital in Glasgow to be met with a formidable opposition: just behind their usual spot was a multi-coloured mural made up of banners peppered with messages such as "No womb for your opinion", "Keep your rosaries off my ovaries" and "Yer da protests abortion". There were recurring visual motifs, many used in abortion rights campaigns for decades, such as a cartoon uterus giving the finger, wearing a sombrero ("Nacho uterus, nacho business"), or gleefully booting a foetus.

The counter-protest caught the attention of Glasgow Women's Library, which collects banners, badges and other ephemera from across the women's liberation movement, many predating the organisation's founding in 1991. You'll find placards and pins from the original abortion rights movement of the 1970s to the Repeal the 8th campaign to lift the abortion ban in Ireland. When they saw the displays from the Glasgow protests, they agreed to archive many of the materials as important social-historical documents and artworks in their own right.

> When I see witch-themed signs, I wonder: 'Did I start these?'

In their archive room, Jenny Noble, museum curator at the library, and archivist Nicola Maksymuik, talk me through their work. "We have a special indexing system here to reflect the vast range of women's experiences," Noble explains. This system is designed by the organisation's librarian Wendy Kirk; it includes headings and subheadings like "feminist/lesbian/queer aesthetics" and "LGBTQI history and culture". This allows items to be archived in a way that reflects their cultural significance.

Traditionally, movements for political change have been accompanied by flowerings of creative activity. The Women's Library archive holds items that are undeniably works of art. These include textile artist Claire Hunter's 1987 banner A Woman's Place Is in the World, made for the miners' strikes, the One World Quilt stitched by the Black Environment Network in 2000, and a sign reading "Solidarity From Glasgow" painted by Niamh Forbes for Repeal the 8th. The library has also collected materials made by Shetland art collective Gaada for their Up Helly Aa for Aa campaign to allow women's participation in the islands' traditional fire ceremonies.

However, when the library chose to collect materials from the Queen Elizabeth protest it was because of the pivotal period in Scottish and global women's history that they reflect. Organisations such as Back Off Scotland and Humanist Society Scotland are currently pushing to introduce protest-free "buffer zones" around abortion clinics in Scotland, to match similar legislation in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. If a bill introduced by Green MSP Gillian Mackay passes through Holyrood this year, protests like last month's - which many see as religiously motivated harassment - will no longer be legal. As the legislative net threatens to close around the Scottish anti-abortion movement it has redoubled its public agitation. Pro-choice campaigner Gemma Clark wouldn't call herself an artist, but believes there's much to be gained from making creative materials to counter attacks on women's rights. "Having to fight for your basic rights all the time is exhausting," she says, "and so making signs is quite mindful. Plus my bubble-writing skills as a primary school teacher have come in useful!" She agrees that the recycling of designs and phrases across materials is a bit like folk art, with ideas contributed anonymously to an evolving collective lexicon. "When I was at a rally in London my sign said, 'Forced birthers are modern day witch-prickers', and I've seen a few witch-themed signs since then. I'm like, 'Did I start that?'"

To counter the protest outside the Queen Elizabeth (which offers abortion services), she and her husband, Douglas, coordinated with Cabaret Against the Hate-Speech (Cath), a group that plans karaoke singalongs for counter-protests. Cath gathered dozens of signs from previous women's and trans rights marches and put a call out for new ones. At 7am on the morning of the vigil they affixed the signs to the long fence behind where the crowds congregated. Because the British Pregnancy Advice Service advises against live counter-protests, this strong visual presence made pro-choice opinion clear.

Whether the materials from that day are recorded as artworks or something else doesn't really matter, Noble tells me. "It could be a really intricate textile piece or something someone's written on cardboard with marker pen ... it's all valuable. I think a lot of women don't realise that when they make these things they're participating in women's history."



Empathetic and inquisitive … Rebekah Vardy

Review Rebekah Vardy: Jehovah's Witnesses and Me, Channel 4

An eye-opening account of life in a 'high control' religious group

★★★★☆

Rebecca Nicholson



It may sound as if its title has come from the Alan Partridge school of TV commissioning, but there is nothing at all humorous about Rebekah Vardy: Jehovah's Witnesses and Me. Vardy gets her notoriety out of the way in the early moments of this powerful film, explaining that she is best known as the wife of a Premier League footballer and "a bit of a controversial character from *that* trial".

What follows is a harrowing account of her early life as a Jehovah's Witness and an investigation of the Christian denomination, its structures and its practices. Vardy has spoken before about being raised as a Jehovah's Witness and her dislike of the organisation. Four years ago, she told the Loose Women panel that it was "horrible" and that, as a child, she felt alienated from other children, who would "poke fingers" at her for her beliefs.

Here, she goes much further, describing a series of traumatic events, while meeting others who describe their experiences within what is portrayed as a "high control" religion. (As you would expect from a film so accusatory, there is a lot of back and forth, as the Jehovah's Witnesses UK branch committee is given the right to reply to each allegation. In one response, they call the idea that the religion is controlling "misleading and discriminatory".)

Vardy points out that, in the UK, home to about 130,000 adult Jehovah's Witnesses – there are roughly 8.5 million members worldwide – very little is known about the organisation and how it operates. She suggests that the perception from outsiders is of "harmless Christians that knock on your door, wanting to talk about God".

She offers her own view of what it was like growing up in Norwich, attending Kingdom Hall meetings and Bible studies twice a week, or standing on the street doing "service rounds". She talks of the end of days and the books she read when she was very young, which showed her detailed pictures of what Armageddon would look like.

From the age of 11, her life fell into disarray. Her parents divorced and she left Norwich, leading to former family members and friends "shunning" the family. (Divorce is allowed only under very limited circumstances.) At 12, Vardy was sexually abused. By 15, she was "acting out" and was told to leave the family home. She has since had very little contact with her family, many of whom are still Jehovah's Witnesses.

The Jehovah's Witnesses deny that "shunning" takes place, but there are several accounts here from people who have left the church and say that even their closest family members no longer talk to them. One man admits that he shunned his own children and was instructed to hang up the phone if they called him.

Vardy acknowledges that she feels a sense of guilt, even now, in going against the group and its teachings. But she is not alone. She expands her remit beyond the personal, speaking to others with stories to share. She meets a woman who had an affair while married, who alleges that the husband is treated as the head of the family and has absolute control over what happens within it.

After explaining the system of "elders" – senior male members of the church who provide "spiritual guidance" – Vardy meets two former elders who now consider themselves to be "free". These men describe how the system works and why they believe it meets the parameters of "high control". She also meets a woman who was a Jehovah's Witness for 50 years and courageously waives her right to anonymity to discuss being sexually abused as a child, as well as the horrific denials and labyrinthine procedures she faced when she tried to report it.

As a presenter, Vardy is empathic and inquisitive. Clearly, she knows this world; when she meets others who have been through similar experiences, she has meaningful conversations perhaps because she has been there, too. When she tries to talk to the Jehovah's Witnesses UK branch on camera, no one will come forward.

That is not surprising, but this documentary certainly is. You may come to it cynically, thinking it an attempt at career rehabilitation after "*that* trial", but I doubt you will get to the end and still think that way.

What's On

Scan the QR code below to sign up for the What's On newsletter, our free TV email with the best reviews, news and exclusive writing direct to your inbox every Monday

Matt Willis: Fighting Addiction
9pm, BBC One



"I'm terrified of relapse. If I do that again, everything will end." Busted bass player, actor and dad-of-three Matt Willis *(above left, with his brother Darren)* has spent most of his adult life dealing with addiction (he left rehab the day before marrying his wife, Emma Willis, in 2008). Now sober, in this documentary he investigates his past to try to find the root cause, while also putting the spotlight on the people in his life whom it has affected the most, including Emma.
Hollie Richardson

Designing the Hebrides
8pm, BBC Two
Just when you thought host Banjo Beale couldn't get any more lovable, he sheds a tear thinking about what the farm he calls home means to him. The catalyst is a brief for a gin-tasting bar on a tiny budget. Scavenging for church pews and imagining "a secret door of cheeseboards" lightens the mood as he gets busy.
Hannah Verdier

11 Minutes: America's Deadliest Mass Shooting
9pm, BBC Two
In 2017, the country star Jason Aldean took to the stage at Route 91 Harvest in Las Vegas to perform in front of tens of thousands of fans when a gunman started shooting the crowd. He killed 60 people and injured about 800. Here, survivors give their collective version of events. **HR**

Kids
9pm, Channel 4
Growing up in the care system is challenging enough, but what happens when you turn 18 and have to leave? This week, the powerful and often heartwrenching series embedded with Coventry children's services examines two such cases. Hedonistic Byron seems to relish his independence (at least at first); introvert Bayley is more equivocal.
Graeme Virtue

Rookie Nurses
9pm, BBC Three
"When I first put those blues on, I got impostor syndrome," says upbeat A&E nurse Mikey. "I thought I was in fancy dress." And yet he is exactly the nurse you'd want, as he proves when he treats a head-and-neck injury. He's one of seven freshly graduated Welsh nurses in this new documentary series. **HR**

Naked Attraction
10pm, Channel 4
This dating show manages to have its cake and eat it, being both mildly titillating and admirably body-positive. Sam from Melton Mowbray is in search of a superhero-style partner and Tony, a former Royal Marine from Plymouth, is looking for a woman compatible with his dog and his son from a previous relationship.
Phil Harrison

BBC One

6.0 **Breakfast** (T) **9.15** Rip Off Britain (T) **10.0** Frontline Fightback (T) **10.45** Defenders UK (T) **11.15** Homes Under the Hammer (T) (R) **12.15** Bargain Hunt (T) (R) **1.0** News (T) **1.30** Regional News and Weather (T) **1.45** Doctors (T) **2.15** Money for Nothing (T) **3.0** Escape to the Country (T) (R) **3.45** The Bidding Room (T) (R) **4.30** The Repair Shop (T) (R) **5.15** Pointless (T) (R) **6.0** News (T) **6.30** Regional News and Weather (T) **7.0** The One Show (T) **7.30** EastEnders (T)

8.0 **The Repair Shop** (T) (R) The team restore a crumbling cast-iron gate, a century-old watch, a rocking chair and a vintage penny arcade game.

9.0 **Matt Willis: Fighting Addiction** (T) The bassist and co-founder of Busted opens up about his experiences battling drug and alcohol addiction.

10.0 **News** (T)
10.30 **Regional News** (T) Weather
10.40 **I Kissed a Boy** (T) (R) Dannii Minogue presents a dating show for gay men, in which 10 contestants are matched up by kissing before they have spoken to each other.
11.25 **I Kissed a Boy** (T) (R)
12.20 **Weather for the Week Ahead** (T) **12.25** News (T)

BBC Two

6.15 **Homes Under the Hammer** (T) (R) **7.15** Money for Nothing (T) (R) **8.0** Sign Zone: 24/7 Pet Hospital (T) (R) **8.30** Take a Hike (T) (R) **9.0** Nicky Campbell (T) **11.0** News (T) **11.15** Politics Live (T) **1.0** Impossible (T) (R) **1.45** Eggheads (T) (R) **2.15** Eat Well for Less? (T) (R) **3.15** Secret Britain (T) (R) **4.15** Interior Design Masters With Alan Carr (T) (R) **5.15** Flog It! (T) (R) **6.0** Richard Osman's House of Games (T) (R) **6.30** Clive Myrie's Italian Road Trip (T) **7.0** Digging for Britain (T) (R)

8.0 **Designing the Hebrides** (T) Banjo Beale is asked to design a rustic gin-tasting bar.

8.30 **Wales' Home of the Year** (T) The final. Last in the series.

9.0 **11 Minutes: America's Deadliest Mass Shooting** (T) New series. Documentary about the attack on the 2017 Route 91 Harvest music festival in Las Vegas.

10.30 **Newsnight** (T) Weather
11.15 **Unspun World With John Simpson** (T) News review.
11.45 **Forensics: The Real CSI** (T) (R) The forensics team must identify and arrest a rapist.
12.45 **Sign Zone** Gordon Ramsay's Future Food Stars (T) (R) **1.45** Saving Lives in Leeds (T) (R) **2.45** MasterChef (T) (R) **3.45** This Is BBC Two (T)

ITV1

6.0 **Good Morning Britain** (T) **9.0** Lorraine (T) **10.0** This Morning (T) **12.30** Loose Women (T) **1.30** News and Weather (T) **1.55** Local News and Weather (T) **2.0** Dickinson's Real Deal (T) (R) **3.0** Tenable (T) (R) **4.0** Tipping Point (T) **5.0** The Chase (T) **6.0** Local News and Weather (T) **6.30** News and Weather (T) **7.30** Emmerdale (T)

8.0 **Coronation Street** (T) Abi and Tyrone sack Aaron, while Eric announces he is suing Amy for libel.

9.0 **Without Sin** (T) Stella uncovers a darker side to Maisy, which leads to some home truths about her marriage and her parenting. Her secrets bring Stella closer to the truth.

10.0 **News** (T) Weather
10.30 **Local News** (T) Weather
10.45 **Peston** (T) Political chat.
11.40 **Heathrow: Britain's Busiest Airport** (T) (R)
12.0 **EFL Highlights** (T) **12.50** Shop: Ideal World **3.0** Food Prices: How High Will They Go? (T) (R) **3.25** Emmerdale: 50 Unforgettable Years (T) **4.15** Unwind With ITV (T)

Channel 4

6.05 **Countdown** (T) (R) **6.45** Cheers (T) (R) **7.35** The King of Queens (T) (R) **8.25** Frasier (T) (R) **8.55** Frasier (T) (R) **9.55** Find It, Fix It, Flog It (T) (R) **10.55** Couples Come Dine With Me (T) (R) **11.55** News (T) **12.0** Steph's Packed Lunch (T) **2.10** Countdown (T) **3.0** Sun, Sea and Selling Houses (T) (R) **4.0** A Place in the Sun (T) **5.0** Help! We Bought a Village (T) (R) **6.0** The Simpsons (T) (R) **6.30** Hollyoaks (T) (R) **7.0** News (T)

8.0 **Location, Location, Location** (T) In Surrey, Kirstie and Phil are searching for a home to bring couple Eleanor and Laurence closer to family.

9.0 **Kids** (T) Seventeen-year-old Bayley prepares to leave the care home, and Byron shocks everyone by leaving the security of life with his long-term foster carers.

10.0 **Naked Attraction** (T)
11.05 **First Dates** (T) (R)
12.05 **24 Hours in A&E** (T) (R) **1.05** Kitchen Nightmares USA (T) (R) **1.55** Couples Come Dine With Me (T) (R) **2.50** Grand Designs (T) (R) **3.45** Unreported World (T) (R) **4.10** The Great British Dig (T) (R) **5.05** Jamie's Comfort Food (T) **5.15** Moneybags (T)

Channel 5

6.0 **Milkshake!** **9.15** Jeremy Vine (T) **11.15** Storm Huntley (T) **12.15** Alexis Conran (T) **1.40** News (T) **1.45** Home and Away (T) (R) **2.15** FILM Killer in the Attic (David DeCoteau, 2021) (T) **4.0** Bargain-Loving Brits in the Sun (T) (R) **5.0** News (T) **6.0** Eggheads (T) (R) **7.0** Michael Portillo's Pyrenees Adventure (T) (R)

8.0 **Natural History Museum: World of Wonder** (T) The Urban Nature Project team start the ambitious transformation of the Natural History Museum garden, and Kieran repairs a fossil.

9.0 **999: Critical Condition** (T) A man is rushed in with some of the worst facial injuries the team have ever seen.

10.0 **Casualty 24/7: Every Second Counts** (T) (R)
11.05 **A&E After Dark** (T) (R)
12.05 **Criminals Caught on Camera** (T) (R) **1.0** Teleshopping (T) **3.0** Good Girls' Guide to Kinky Sex (T) (R) **3.45** GPs: Behind Closed Doors (T) (R) **4.35** Wildlife SOS (T) (R) **4.55** House Doctor (T) (R) **5.20** Milkshake! (T) (R)

BBC Four

7.0 **Great Railway Journeys** (T) (R) Victoria Wood tours northern England and Scotland, starting in Crewe.

7.55 **Victoria Wood: A Bafta Tribute** (T) (R) A celebration of the comedian, actor and writer, with Julie Walters, Lenny Henry, Richard E Grant and Jim Broadbent.

9.0 **Victoria Wood: The Secret List** (T) (R) Part one of two. Favourite sketches chosen by Wood in a notebook discovered after her death.

10.0 **Duncan Preston Remembers: Pat and Margaret** (T) (R)
10.10 **Pat and Margaret** (T) (R) Comedy-drama, with Victoria Wood and Julie Walters.
11.35 **Victoria Wood: The Secret List** (T) (R) Part two of two.
12.35 **Victoria Wood: A Personal View** (T) (R) **1.0** Mindful Escapes (T) (R) **1.30** Great Railway Journeys (T) (R)

Other channels

BBC Three

7.0pm Top Gear **8.0** Glow Up: Britain's Next Make-Up Star **9.0** Rookie Nurses **10.0** FILM Easy A (2010) **11.30** Glow Up: Britain's Next Make-Up Star **12.30** Rookie Nurses **1.30** Therapy: Tough Talking **2.0** Top Gear **3.0** Rookie Nurses

Dave

6.0am Teleshopping **7.10** Driving Wars **8.0** Border Force: America's Gatekeepers **9.0** Cops on the Rock **10.0** Storage Hunters UK **10.30** Storage Hunters UK **11.0** Rick Stein's Road to Mexico **12.0** Special Ops: Crime Squad UK **1.0** Border Force: America's Gatekeepers **2.0** Top Gear **3.0** Top Gear **4.0** Secrets of the Supercars **5.0** Expedition With Steve Backshall **6.0** Taskmaster **7.0** Richard Osman's House of Games **7.40** House of Games **8.20** Room 101 **9.0** Have I Got a Bit More News for You **10.0** QI XL **11.0** QI XL **12.0** Mock the Week **12.40** QI **1.20** Dave Gorman: Modern Life Is Goodish **2.30** Richard Osman's House of Games **3.0** Whose Line Is It Anyway? USA **3.25** Whose Line Is It Anyway? USA **4.0** Teleshopping

E4

6.0am Hollyoaks **6.30** Hollyoaks **7.0** Ramsay's Kitchen Nightmares USA **8.0** Ramsay's Kitchen Nightmares USA **9.0** The Neighborhood **9.30** The Neighborhood **10.0** The Big Bang Theory **10.30** The Big Bang Theory **11.0** Modern Family **11.30** Modern Family **12.0** Brooklyn Nine-Nine **12.30** Brooklyn Nine-Nine **1.0** The Big Bang Theory **1.30** The Big Bang Theory **2.0** The Big Bang Theory **2.30** The Big Bang Theory **3.0** Modern Family **3.30** Modern Family **4.0** Brooklyn Nine-Nine **4.30** Brooklyn Nine-Nine **5.0** The Big Bang Theory **5.30** The Big Bang Theory **6.0** The Big Bang Theory **6.30** The Big Bang Theory **7.0** Hollyoaks **7.30** The Big Bang Theory **8.0** Below Deck Sailing Yacht **9.0** The Big Celebrity Detox **10.0** Emergency on Sunny Beach **11.05** Gogglebox **12.10** Naked Attraction **1.15** The Big Celebrity Detox **2.20** Emergency on Sunny Beach **3.15** Below Deck Sailing Yacht **4.05** Ramsay's Kitchen Nightmares USA **4.55** The Neighborhood **5.20** The Neighborhood

Film4

11.0am FILM The Yellow Balloon (1953) **12.40** FILM Footsteps in the Fog (1955) **2.30** FILM The Long Arm (1956) **4.30** FILM First Men in the Moon (1964) **6.35** FILM Star Trek (2009) **9.0** FILM Flight (2012) **11.45** FILM Hell Or High Water (2016) **1.50** FILM The Escapist (2008)

ITV2

6.0am World's Funniest Videos **6.35** Totally Bonkers Guinness World Records **7.0** Dress to Impress **8.0** One Tree Hill **9.0** Dawson's Creek **10.0** Secret Crush **11.0** Dress to Impress **12.0** Celebrity Dinner Date **1.0** Family Fortunes **2.0** Chuck **3.05** One Tree Hill **4.0** Dawson's Creek **5.0** Celebrity Dinner Date **6.0** Celebrity Catchphrase **7.0** Superstore **7.30** Superstore **8.0** Bob's Burgers **8.30** Bob's Burgers **9.0** Hell's Kitchen **10.0** Shopping With Keith Lemon **10.30** Family Guy **11.30** American Dad! **12.30** Bob's Burgers **1.30** Superstore **2.25** Totally Bonkers Guinness World Records **2.50** Unwind With ITV **3.0** Teleshopping

Sky Max

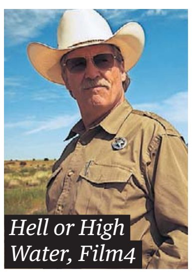
6.0am Stargate SG-1 **8.0** DC's Legends of Tomorrow **9.0** Quantum Leap **10.0** The Flash **11.0** NCIS: New Orleans **1.0** Hawaii Five-0 **2.0** MacGyver **3.0** Quantum Leap **4.0** Supergirl **5.0** The Flash **6.0** Stargate SG-1 **8.0** S.W.A.T **9.0** FILM The Last Witch Hunter (2015) **11.0** Strike Back: Shadow Warfare **12.0** Fast & Furious: Greatest Moments Refuelled **1.0** Brassic **2.0** Stop, Search, Seize **3.0** Hawaii Five-0 **4.0** MacGyver **5.0** Highway Patrol

Sky Arts

6.0am Darbar: Music of India **7.0** André Rieu: Live at the Royal Albert Hall **9.0** Tales of the Unexpected **9.30** Tales of the Unexpected **10.0** Alfred Hitchcock Presents **11.0** Discovering: Edward G Robinson **12.0** Cezanne: Portraits of a Life **1.0** Tales of the Unexpected **2.0** Manet from the Royal Academy of Arts, London **3.0** The Directors **4.0** Discovering: Jack Lemmon **5.0** Tales of the Unexpected **5.30** Tales of the Unexpected **6.0** Alfred Hitchcock Presents **7.0** Discovering: Frances McDormand **8.0** Portrait Artist of the Year 2018 **9.0** Painting Birds With Jim and Nancy Moir **10.0** FILM Steve McQueen: The Lost Movie (2021) **11.50** FILM I Am Bruce Lee (2011) **1.45** Statues Redressed **3.40** Lenny Henry's Got the Blues **4.40** Auction: George Michael Special **5.05** Auction **5.30** Auction

Sky Atlantic

6.0am Urban Secrets **7.55** The Wire **10.05** True Blood **11.10** True Blood **12.15** Game of Thrones **1.20** Ray Donovan **3.30** The Wire **5.45** True Blood **7.55** Game of Thrones **9.0** Perry Mason **10.05** Succession **11.15** Dreamland **11.45** The Night Of **12.55** Sharp Objects **2.0** The L Word: Generation Q **3.0** Game of Thrones **4.05** Urban Secrets



Hell or High Water, Film4

Radio

Radio 3

6.30am Breakfast **9.0** Essential Classics **12.0** Composer of the Week: Tchaikovsky (3/5) **1.0** Lunchtime Concert. Soprano Ruby Hughes and theorbo player Sergio Bucheli play works by Strozzi and Dowland, plus songs from the Peruvian Codex Zuola. **2.0** Afternoon Concert. The Ulster Orchestra perform Sibelius's Fifth Symphony. Plus, Ravel's La Valse from the BBC SO. **4.0** Choral Evensong **5.0** In Tune **7.0** Classical Mixtape **7.30** In Concert. James Feddeck conducts the BBC NOW in Clyne's Masquerade, Tchaikovsky's Piano Concerto No 1 in B flat minor, Op 23 (with pianist Daniel Ciobanu) and Rachmaninov's Symphonic Dances, Op 45. **10.0** Free Thinking. Camp sensibilities and links to the gothic. **10.45** The Essay: De Waal's Itinerant Pots. Edmund De Waal on the Schindler House in California. (R) **11.0** Night Tracks **12.30** Through the Night

Radio 4

6.0am Today **8.31** (LW) Yesterday in Parliament **9.0** Life Changing (7/7) **9.30** Please Protect Abraham. The police launch an investigation. (R) **9.45** (LW) Daily Service **9.45** (FM) Book of the Week: Into the Night – A Year With the Police (3/5) **10.0** Woman's Hour **11.0** Buying a British Dad (R) **11.30** A Very British Cult. A focus on the loved ones of those who are in Lighthouse. (7/8) **12.0** News **12.01** (LW) Shipping Forecast **12.04** You and Yours **1.0** The World at One **1.45** Frontlines of Journalism. Jeremy Bowen considers how much detail is enough when reporting. (8/10) **2.0** The Archers (R) **2.15** I Don't Believe You. Drama, by Robert Forrest. (R) **3.0** Money Box Live **3.30** All in the Mind (R) **4.0** Thinking Allowed (7/10) **4.30** The Media Show **5.0** PM **5.54** (LW) Shipping Forecast **6.0** News **6.30** Lemn Sissay's Social Enterprise. What charity means when it comes to time. (4/4) **7.0** The Archers **7.15** Front Row **8.0** Bringing Up Britain. A mother is unsure if she should encourage her teenage boys to go to university. (4/4) **8.45** Metamorphosis: How Insects Transformed Our World (R) **9.0** Costing the Earth (R) **9.30** The Media Show (R) **10.0** The World Tonight **10.45** Book at Bedtime (3/10) **11.0** Jamie MacDonald: Life on the Blink (4/4) **11.15** The Skewer (2/7) **11.30** Today in Parliament **12.0** News **12.30** Book of the Week (R) **12.48** Shipping Forecast **1.0** As World Service **5.20** Shipping Forecast **5.30** News **5.43** Prayer for the Day **5.45** Farming Today **5.58** Tweet of the Day (R)

Radio 4 Extra

6.0am Shadows in Bronze (1/6) **6.30** Dr Finlay: The Further Adventures of a Black Bag (4/6) **7.0** Hello World: How to Be Human in the Age of the Machine (3/5) **7.15** Young Victoria (8/10) **7.30** Women Talking About Cars (3/4) **8.0** Hancock's Half Hour **8.30** Life, Death and Sex With Mike and Sue (1/6) **9.0** Nature Table (1/6) **9.30** Hobby Bobbies (4/4) **10.0** Parson Harding's Daughter (2/3) **11.0** Shadows in Bronze (1/6) **11.30** Dr Finlay: The Further Adventures of a Black Bag (4/6) **12.0** Hello World: How to Be Human in the Age of the Machine (3/5) **12.15** Young Victoria (8/10) **12.30** Women Talking About Cars (3/4) **1.0** Hancock's Half Hour **1.30** Life, Death and Sex With Mike and Sue (1/6) **2.0** Nature Table (1/6) **2.30** Hobby Bobbies (4/4) **3.0** Parson Harding's Daughter (2/3) **4.0** Shadows in Bronze (1/6) **4.30** Dr Finlay (4/6) **5.0** Hello World (3/5) **5.15** Young Victoria (8/10) **5.30** Women Talking About Cars (3/4) **6.0** Hancock's Half Hour **6.30** Life, Death and Sex With Mike and Sue (1/6) **7.0** Nature Table (1/6) **7.30** Hobby Bobbies (4/4) **8.0** Victoria Wood: From Soup to Nuts (1/2) **8.30** Ways of Thinking **9.0** Short Cuts (3/6) **9.30** A Gathering Light (3/5) **9.45** The Shadow Over Innsmouth (8/15) **10.0** Lemn Sissay's Social Enterprise (2/4) **10.30** Pick-Ups (4/6) **11.0** The Sofa of Time (1/6) **11.30** The Mel and Sue Thing (1/6) **12.0** Parson Harding's Daughter (2/3) **1.0** Shadows in Bronze (1/6) **1.30** Dr Finlay (4/6) **2.0** Hello World (3/5) **2.15** Young Victoria (8/10) **2.30** Women Talking About Cars (3/4) **3.0** Hancock's Half Hour **3.30** Life, Death and Sex With Mike and Sue (1/6) **4.0** Nature Table (1/6) **4.30** Hobby Bobbies (4/4) **5.0** Parson Harding's Daughter (3/3)

Puzzles

Yesterday's solutions

Wordsearch

L	C	Y	W	E	I	V	E	R
C	L	A	R	K	S	O	N	A
K	O	L	R	T	E	D	L	C
C	A	I	U	S	H	E	H	E
A	I	N	D	U	A	G	R	S
G	T	R	M	U	N	S	A	R
S	I	O	C	I	T	T	G	U
E	U	T	V	U	L	S	N	N
R	M	I	S	O	I	E	A	W
E	R	O	T	O	M	T	H	A
D	D	E	N	G	I	N	E	Y

Solution no 16,544



Sudoku no 6064

1	7	3	2	9	6	4	8	5
8	5	4	3	7	1	6	9	2
6	2	9	4	5	8	3	7	1
2	3	5	1	4	7	8	6	9
9	1	6	8	3	5	7	2	4
7	4	8	9	6	2	5	1	3
5	9	1	6	8	4	2	3	7
4	8	2	7	1	3	9	5	6
3	6	7	5	2	9	1	4	8

Word wheel

MARKETING

Suguru

1	2	1	2	4	1
5	3	4	3	5	2
4	1	5	2	4	1
2	3	4	1	3	2
1	5	2	5	4	1
3	4	1	3	2	3

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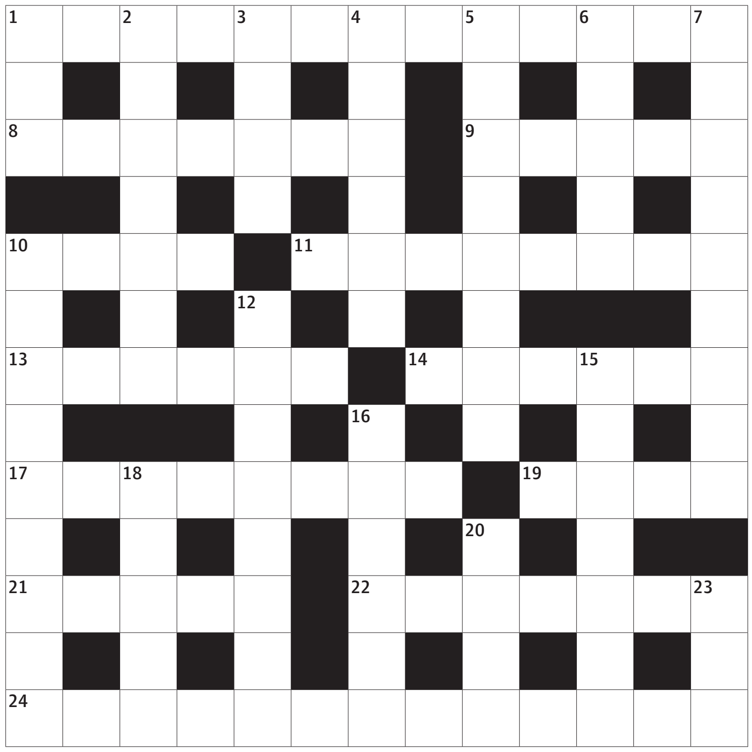
Quick crossword no 16,545

Across

1 Neil Diamond song adopted by England fans in Euro 2020 (5,8)
8 Carry out (7)
9 Small group of trees (5)
10 Dorothy's dog (4)
11 Hollywood celebrity (4,4)
13 Consider to be right and proper (6)
14 Lay to rest (6)
17 Without any vitality (8)
19 Spots (4)
21 Willow with flexible twigs used in basketry (5)
22 Whim (7)
24 Le Roi Soleil, d. 1715 (5,8)

Down

1 Solution got from trees (3)
2 Liable to sudden changes (7)
3 Use the horn (4)
4 I'm rapt (anag) (6)
5 Moving this way (8)
6 Extra data (5)
7 Atrocious (9)
10 Inedible fungus (9)
12 Outraged (2,2,4)
15 Connected with kissing (7)
16 Not having been moved (2,4)
18 Farewell (5)
20 Petty dispute (4)
23 Dolly the sheep, say (3)



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Sudoku no 6065

Medium. Fill the grid so that each row, column and 3x3 box contains the numbers 1-9. Printable version at theguardian.com/sudoku

6								
		3		6	7			
				9		7	2	
2				3		8	7	9
	6		2		9		1	
9	3	7		5				2
	8	2		1				
			3	8		4		
								1

Suguru

Fill the grid so that each square in an outlined block contains a digit. A block of two squares contains the digits 1 and 2, a block of three squares contains the digits 1, 2 and 3, and so on. No same digit appears in neighbouring squares, not even diagonally.

			4		
		1			1
	3				
	1	5		2	
				3	1
	4				

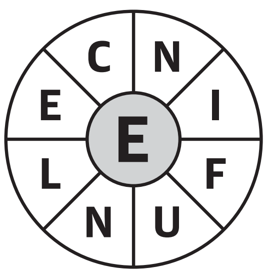
Wordsearch

Can you find 15 types of jacket in the grid? Words can run forwards, backwards, vertically or diagonally, but always in a straight, unbroken line.

E	S	B	O	L	E	R	O	L
R	P	A	R	K	A	L	E	S
E	B	A	F	T	E	F	H	A
B	L	G	C	A	F	P	Z	N
M	A	N	T	U	R	S	E	O
O	Z	H	D	E	M	I	L	R
B	E	T	N	I	L	S	U	A
R	R	T	N	D	I	I	O	K
F	L	E	E	C	E	N	G	S
T	D	R	E	K	I	B	A	H
R	E	F	E	E	R	U	C	I

Word wheel

Find as many words as possible using the letters in the wheel. Each must use the central letter and at least two others. Letters may be used only once. You may not use plurals, foreign words or proper nouns. There is at least one nine-letter word to be found. TARGET: Excellent-33. Good-28. Average-20.



Trivia corner

Which author was voted by the public as the Best of the Booker in 2008?
a. Pat Barker
b. Peter Carey
c. JM Coetzee
d. Salman Rushdie
Answer top right



TODAY'S TRIVIA CORNER ANSWER **SALMAN RUSHDIE**